

A DESIGN FOR AN INTENTIONAL MINISTRY FOR FILIPINOS
IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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In Partial Fulfillment
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Doctor of Ministry

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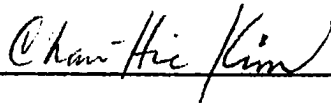
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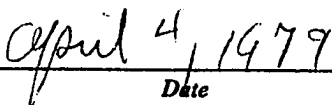
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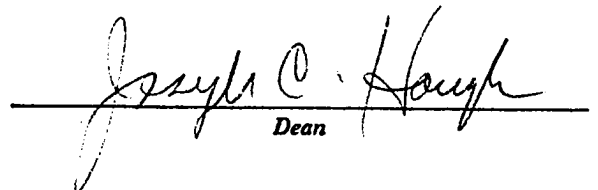
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TO MY PEOPLE: WHO, BY KNOWING INJUSTICE AND OPPRESSION,
TAUGHT ME WHAT IT MEANS TO BE IN FREEDOM;
TO THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH: WHICH, AS THE COVENANT
COMMUNITY, PROVIDES ME WITH A HOME;
TO MY PARENTS: WHO FIRST TAUGHT ME TRUE FAITH AND
DISCIPLESHIP;
TO MY SON, A GOOD LEARNER AND FOR WHOM I PRAY
WISDOM; AND ESPECIALLY
TO MY DEAR WIFE, GERDA, WHOSE LOVE INSPIRES EXCELLENCE,
UPHOLDS, AND STRENGTHENS FAITH.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | iii |
| Chapter | |
| 1. INTRODUCTION. | 1 |
| 2. UNITED METHODISM AND THE NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY. | 5 |
| Brief Historical Account. | 5 |
| Nature of the Group. | 5 |
| The Conversion. | 8 |
| Stages of Development. | 8 |
| Aldersgate and Related Events. | 10 |
| Beyond Aldersgate. | 11 |
| Expansion. | 13 |
| Ministry in United Methodism. | 14 |
| The Serving Community. | 15 |
| Without Limits. | 16 |
| Ministry of All Believers. | 17 |
| Diaconal Ministry. | 17 |
| Ordained Ministry. | 18 |
| Connectionalism. | 19 |
| The Superintendency. | 20 |
| Nature of Ministry. | 21 |
| 3. ETHNIC DIVERSITY, THE CAUCUSES AND UNITED METHODISM. | 24 |
| Ethnic Diversity. | 24 |
| Unmeltable Ethnics. | 26 |
| The Native Americans. | 27 |
| Hispanic Americans. | 31 |
| The Blacks. | 34 |
| The Asian Americans. | 35 |
| Where We Are Today. | 40 |
| 4. THE CAUCUSES AND A PLURALISTIC CHURCH MINISTRY. | 42 |
| Cultural Affirmation. | 42 |
| What a Caucus Is. | 43 |
| Where the Caucuses Are/ A Role for the Caucuses. | 44 |
| Prophetic Responsibility. | 45 |
| The Caucuses and Pluralism. | 46 |
| 1968 General Conference. | 49 |
| 5. THE GOSPEL AND THE CAUCUSES: A SYNTHESIS. | 51 |
| Liberation Theology. | 52 |
| Historical Figures. | 53 |
| Strong Concerns. | 55 |
| Overworking Change. | 56 |
| Concern for Balance. | 57 |
| 6. THE FILIPINO CAUCUS AS MINISTRY. | 59 |
| The Filipino Caucus and the Caucus Movement. | 60 |
| Los Angeles: Initial Strategies. | 62 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|----|--|-----|
| | Foundation for Watersheds. | 63 |
| | Grant for Self-Determination. | 64 |
| | Community Developer Project. | 64 |
| | Instructive Events. | 65 |
| | Closing Ranks. | 67 |
| | A New Approach. | 68 |
| | Renewed Emphasis on Goal. | 69 |
| | No Longer Unnecessary. | 70 |
| 7. | THE NEED FOR AN INTENTIONAL MINISTRY FOR FILIPINOS. | 71 |
| | Statistics. | 72 |
| | Recapitulation | 78 |
| | Continued Hostility and Misunderstanding. | 80 |
| | Features of Intentionality. | 82 |
| | Content and Theology. | 82 |
| | Social Realities/ Covenant Community. | 83 |
| | Discipleship and Service. | 84 |
| 8. | DESIGN FOR AN INTENTIONAL MINISTRY WITH FILIPINOS. | 85 |
| | Evangelistic Outreach and Preaching. | 87 |
| | Curriculum Development and Enrichment. | 91 |
| | The Materials | 92 |
| | CHILDREN - ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT. | 93 |
| | God Wants Us to be Happy/ Alex Found a Home. | 93 |
| | Who Needs Water? / Wells and Water Pumps. | 96 |
| | Does God Care When We Are Hungry/ Ambassador of Good Nutrition. | 98 |
| | God Lays His Hands of Comfort/ Dr. Jose Rizal. | 99 |
| | God Loves and Forgives Us/ Nonoy Finds the Right Direction | 100 |
| | We Care About Others/ The New Girl in School. | 103 |
| | We Care About the Helpless. | 104 |
| | Telling Others About Jesus. | 105 |
| | Little Missionaries. | 105 |
| | We Pray for Others / Praying Helps. | 106 |
| | Sharing Ourselves With Others / A Happy Decision. | 107 |
| | On Going Process. | 108 |
| | Community Services / Theological Base. | 108 |
| | Other Community Organizations. | 109 |
| | A New Model. | 110 |
| | Other Possibilities. | 114 |
| | Organized Congregation. | 115 |
| | Conclusion. | 116 |
| | (Tentative). | 116 |
| 9. | CONCLUSION. | 117 |
| | Recapitulation. | 117 |
| | Liberation Theme. | 118 |
| | BIBLIOGRAPHY. | 121 |

ABSTRACT

One of the most important facts about the United Methodist Church today is its ethnic diversity. That is also one of the most important assets it has as a church, for that ethnic diversity is a tremendous opportunity for service and ministry.

This thesis proposes an approach to ministry that is intentionally and consciously ethnically alert, based on the conviction that to be ethnically affirmed is not self-enclosure, but genuine community which is honest and unpretending. It will draw upon models that are merely incidental; that is, models in which Filipinos are simply thrust into the consciousness of the local churches, to that of a situation in which a conscious effort is committed for a properly organized approach for ministry with and for them. The experience of other caucuses and ethnic minority groups will be considered or assumed. But biblical and historical models will be drawn upon as well, particularly that of the development of John Wesley's ministry. Personal experience and that of others will also serve as a resource in proposing that a particular ethnic ministry can also be truly catholic in its approach and accountable by means of relating it with the development of the United Methodist societies, that should be relevant and consonant to the desire for inclusiveness within the context of a truly pluralistic church.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

There are growing numbers of Filipinos in Caucasian churches throughout the confines of this Conference, which is the Pacific and Southwest Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, that includes southern California, southern Nevada, all of Arizona and the state of Hawaii. Yet there has been no organized local congregation that was the result of Filipino leadership. Nor is there any significant approach to ministry by either the Filipino community or the Conference that is intentional. Ministry to Filipinos therefore is, at best, incidental. Since Caucasian ministers now suddenly find themselves face to face with the task of ministering to Filipinos along with the with the Caucasian majority, they seek to do their best under, at times, trying circumstances and, in many cases, do so with real sensitivity for this kind of ministry. For the most part, however, the Filipino members must deal with the necessity of having to be assimilated, adopting the ways of the dominant group and, although the Filipino is able to take it in stride because of previous dealings with Americans as a colonizing power, the need for a variety of approaches is becoming more and more imperative.

I have served on this Conference for nine years now. I have served in a variety of situations, and had been in a position to observe varying conditions in regard to ministering to both Filipinos as well as a mixture of whites and Filipinos in a more or less integrated setting. I have also been fortunate in having had a part in the leadership

of the ethnic minority community in the struggle for empowerment in this Conference. And as such I have come increasingly to be convinced that the development of a viable model for ministry to Filipinos will require a great deal of intentionality. I have come to feel that it will be an effort that would be deliberate and unashamedly self-conscious, not only on the part of Filipinos themselves, but on the part of the church as well, as an expression of The United Methodist Church's commitment to pluralism with integrity and genuine inclusiveness.

The purpose of this dissertation is thus to offer a design for an intentional ministry with and for the Filipinos. By its very nature of intentionality, it will perhaps be controversial. But I have examined the various models available and in use among various other ethnic groups, and I have found that their experience challenges me with even greater urgency. I have also taken a close look at the beginning of the Wesleyan movement, particularly the Holy Club and John Wesley's attitude about the ministry that he followed that led to the Wesleyan revival.

In other words, my purpose is to seek to appropriate the evangelistic zeal and organizational genius of The United Methodist Church and other relevant aspects of that rich heritage, and apply those in the development of a ministry, particularly for Filipinos, as an expression of the wholeness of the United Methodist ministry for our day. This is particularly a critical need at this time in the absence of a clearly defined Filipino community of believers. But it will also be important for all others engaged in ministry, be they lay persons, ministers of both the ordained and diaconal sections of the ministry. This is

especially so for those who serve in situations in which they must deal with the influx of Filipinos, who continue to come in increasing numbers as new immigrants.

My use of the term 'intentional' is deliberate. I use that term to mean a conscious, purposeful effort to engage in an aspect or stance of ministry which has otherwise been neglected, ignored or even misunderstood. Furthermore, I use the term here to mean a deliberate attempt in casting forth perhaps in a new direction and emphasis, in response to the Spirit that is at work in the world, for possibilities and promise of a fuller ministry.

As for inclusiveness, it is here used to mean an openness based on the conviction that the kingdom of God is big enough for all. That means not just tolerance of others, but the willingness to accept the cultural and ethnic heritage of so called minority groups to be as valid as that of the dominant, majority groups. This is usually used today in connection with pluralism, which I use here to mean the utility of not just one standard as a measure of authenticity or validity and an affirmation of all cultural and ethnic heritages as intrinsically significant, in so far as all of them assume the task of being confronted with the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

My basic methodology is reports from both my personal experience as a pastor and leader in the ethnic minority community within this Conference; research on Wesley's life and theological understanding; interviews with pastors, both minority and Caucasian, and lay people. I will also share findings of a research done in connection with the Filipino Caucus, and the result of a project in curriculum development and en-

richment, which was inspired by this professional project. With this, I shall offer a design for Filipino ministry which, I believe, would serve the interests not only of Filipinos, but the whole Conference and, I trust, the whole Church, as we all continue to participate in the task of discovering authentic expressions of the faith and use various other means of effectively proclaiming it.

Chapter 2

UNITED METHODISM AND THE NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

Brief Historical Account

The United Methodist Church started in what we might today call a caucus. And what a caucus it was! This took place at Oxford University in 1729. There a group of students, led by John & Charles Wesley and George Whitefield formed, not a Greek letter society as was the practice of the day and even up to this time, but a religious club, in which the members dedicated themselves to Bible study, prayer and spiritual development and good works. The group they formed was not a large one, nor did it remain as a group for too long. Unlike many other clubs formed by university students, nobody else seems to have picked up the idea after the original members had graduated, and the group dispersed soon after and set out on their own individual careers.

But no lack of numbers nor even dissipation as a club could prevent the group and its members from becoming the foundation of a full-blown movement and a truly great church which we have in The United Methodist Church today.

The Nature of the Group

The ultimate influence which that small band of students, and their impact in the world as their group evolved into an ever-expanding fellowship of those who experienced God's grace were a result of a combination of factors.

One of the most important of those factors has to do with the

nature of the group itself. Indeed, it was the very purpose and character of the group that set it off from others of the time, which is a time in which rationalism and intellectualism were rife. Bible study, strict discipline and spiritual development, frequent communion and monastic piety constituted the core of their concerns, combined with pastoral activity among the sick and prisoners. This is how Albert C. Outler, a leading authority in Wesleyana puts it:

On his (John Wesley) return to Oxford he found that a small semi-monastic group had been gathered by his brother Charles for systematic Bible study, mutual discipline in devotion and frequent Communion. This group developed a keen interest in the ancient liturgies and the monastic piety of the fourth-century "desert fathers." It must have seemed natural to everyone involved when John assumed leadership of the group. Its strenuous piety was soon notorious among the lax undergraduates, and tempted them to coin what must have seemed clever and devastating nicknames: The Holy Club, The Reforming Club, Bible Moths, Methodists, Supererogation Men, Enthusiasts. "Methodists" was the nickname that stuck fastest. Wesley disliked it, but with characteristic aplomb he accepted it as a badge of honor, and proceeded to define "the character of a Methodist" as one who really believes and lives "the common principles of Christianity."¹

That group of students stuck together in spite of all. How or why that group of young students could stand the kind of ridicule which was heaped on them by an unbelieving environment will perhaps never be completely understood nor explained!

Another important factor is the rationalistic temper of the time. Elie Halevy, in his short but incisive work on the birth of Methodism, seems to assert that, contrary to the popular conception, Eng-

¹Albert C. Outler (ed.) John Wesley (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 8.

land was not really irreligious. He argues that, indeed, it was not lacking of religious propagandists and the religious spirit. The Puritan ethic pervaded the whole national fiber and manifested this by means of fierce denunciations of Rome by various religious groups, notable of whom were the different dissenting bodies, not to speak of the established church itself. The zeal with which they fought against Romish doctrines and influence made it possible for the Cartesian spirit to flourish, particularly among dissenters. And although this also allowed for the growth of the Whigs, or those that are hostile to Christianity, in particular, or the supernatural or religious, in general, there was, on the whole, a healthy development toward greater knowledge of the Bible, of Christian doctrine and missionary awareness, although perhaps short of zeal. This was true not only among the dissenting sects, but also within the Church of England, where several religious societies have been instituted. Among those societies were the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, the Society for the Reformation of Christian Manners, a fact which establishes the validity and soundness of Halevy's contention.

But a rationalistic mindset, anti-Romanism, and even an increase in knowledge of or interest in the Bible were inadequate in producing a revival of faith. And Elie Halevy asserts that there was needed a combination of ecclesiastical zeal among the clergy and the Protestant piety of the mass of the faithful. And this combination is what the Holy Club, or later the Methodists and their army of highly disciplined and effectual evangelists, eventually supplied.

Here is how he puts it:

When the Methodists started to preach through the breadth of England, they were well received by the great majority of Dissenters. Was not the religion they preached a revival of Puritanism? But they ran up against the distrust and hatred of the ministers, too enlightened and reasonable to enjoy the doctrine and method of the Awakening. And that is why those ministers were not themselves capable of bringing forth an Awakening; and why the Awakening could not come from the Dissenting churches.²

If England was not entirely hostile to the Methodists, as official religious and ecclesiastical leaders were not,--at least initially, neither were they capable of discerning the possibilities that were waiting to be uncovered for all of England and the world through the new movement.

The Conversion

The foregoing considerations point to us the one central fact in the Methodist movement: John Wesley. It was he that provided the starting point, by means of his experience of God's grace as manifested by his so called conversion at Aldersgate street in London on May 24, 1738. That and other related experiences was to the Methodist revival as Paul's Damascus road experience was to the whole gentile world, or Augustine's Milanesian garden experience was to the Roman Catholic world.

Stages of Development

There were some salient features that led to the all-important

²Elie Halevy, The Birth of Methodism in England (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), p. 48.

event of Aldersgate in the life of John Wesley. The first of these embraces his initial personal development, as well as his maturation as a leader of people. This includes his home upbringing, an excellent education obtained from one of England's most prestigious seats of learning, and the wisdom that comes through discernment of the body of knowledge that he acquired in both, as he did through reading as well. The tremendous influence of his family was unmistakable, of his father first of all, who was a clergyman of the Church of England, but especially of his mother, Susanna Annesley, who was herself a minister's daughter; an influence which was of utmost importance in his development both as a man and as a religious leader. Because of all these factors, he became the man that he was, learned but not pedantic nor rationalistic, a leader of people, deeply religious and spiritually sensitive.

In another stage of his development, we find John Wesley in the face of defeat. On October 21, 1735, he left England to become a missionary to the Indians in Georgia, along with his brother, Charles, who had been designated secretary to General Oglethorpe of the Georgia colony. Benjamin Ingham, who was one of the original members of the group in Oxford and a new recruit, Charles Delamotte, both joined them on that missionary venture, both of whom were going to be John Wesley's assistants. But the project ended in utter disappointment. The mission was a total fiasco. John Wesley's hopeless and unfortunate love affair with one Sophie Hopkey, at that time a mere teenager, did not help things any. Perhaps because of that affair he became open to the criticism that he was a tactless pastor. His brother Charles did not fare any better. He bungled his job as secretary to General Oglethorpe

and Ingham and Delamotte were poor and ineffectual assistants in the missionary enterprise. The unhappy affair with Sophie Hopkey, after she eloped with another suitor, became rather complicated when, perhaps in retaliation, he excluded Sophie from Communion. Her husband sued John Wesley for defamation of character. "The result was a furious turmoil, climaxed by a formal grand jury indictment of Wesley on twelve separate counts. The trial dragged out, and after six months of harassment, Wesley fled the tragic farce in disgust and high dudgeon."³

It does not take too much to understand that the manner in which his first attempt to cast out toward Christian perfection through the missionary enterprise only to end not just in failure but in scandal was a deep blow to John Wesley. "He landed back in England, February 1, 1738, sadly discredited and painfully uncertain of his faith and future."⁴

Aldersgate and Related Events

Aldersgate is "holy ground" for United Methodism. As such, there is a tendency to invest it with mythological character, in spite of the fact that it is perhaps one of the most familiar passages in all of Wesley's writings, or events in his life. Be that as it may, we need to note the importance which he attached to it, as witnessed to

³Outler, p. 12.

⁴Ibid., p. 13.

by the unaccustomed lengths in which he presented the experience as a dramatic climax in his journal. There is no doubt that the experience is crucial to an understanding of United Methodism.

As indicated earlier, Wesley took unaccustomed lengths to build to the experience in his account of it in his Journal.⁵ A whole block of accounts, beginning with April 2, 1738 and on to June 7th of the same year belong to it. This includes references to his close association with the Moravian Peter Bohler, as well as accounts of numerous instances of acute spiritual depression, of his readings in the Bible and other devotional literature, prayers and correspondences. Through all the spate of spiritual activity he had come to focus his attention on the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith, and had resolved to deal with it for his own spiritual good. And so it was that that night finally came, his searching ended with his experience of the strangely warmed heart. This is how he put it:

In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for my salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins; even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.⁶

Beyond Aldersgate

The Aldersgate experience made John Wesley a new man. It gave

⁵Ibid., p. 51.

⁶John Wesley, Journal, I, as quoted in Ibid.

him power to rise from the ashes of his missionary disaster in Georgia and provided him first hand experience of faith and of the grace and mercy of God.

Several things happened to enhance his faith and growing power, both as a preacher and as a leader and organizer. One was his reading of the account of the revival in New England contained in the writings of Jonathan Edwards. One other is his reunion with George Whitefield. Back in England from America as a successful preacher and evangelist, George Whitefield had hoped to duplicate his American success at home. He had joined with others who had already been working in Bristol, and had invited John Wesley to come and help him in his evangelistic efforts, hoping to entrust into Wesley's hands the leadership of the new project when he went back to America again. But John Wesley's high church sensibilities, his brother Charles' objections, had kept him from accepting the invitation at once. He nevertheless continued preaching in the churches around London, and wherever he was welcome, to proclaim the new message that God is willing and able to save all sinners. He soon finally gave in to the invitation of Whitefield and on April 2, 1739 he preached in the open air in Bristol to three thousand people. He did the same for several days afterwards, with the same amazing results: people came in great numbers, they listened attentively, their behavior visibly affected by his preaching. This happened in the heart of Wales itself which, although civilization has already begun to make considerable advances, still was pretty uncouth in its ways in comparison to the rest of England. So Halevy makes the following important observation:

Wales was barely emerging from savagery. The north was inhabited by veritable barbarians, nominally Christians and Protestants, but among whom a mass of superstitious practices of Catholic or even pagan origin persisted. On the south coast the exploitation of the mines was giving rise to industry, and, because of the proximity of Bristol, which made trade easier, civilization began to make some advances.⁷

Wesley himself was indeed surprised, not because people responded to him, for he had considerable response to his preaching within the church around London, but because of the magnitude of that response. He could not but notice the similarity in response between the New England revival and what was happening before his eyes. To be sure, it gave added impetus to the growing revival. But more importantly, it did something to him inwardly.

At Aldersgate, he had passed from virtual to real faith, from hoping to having. Edwards and Whitefield had shown him that the Word rightfully preached bears visible fruit. And now, before his eyes, was a harvest of such fruit. What had happened was that he had preached faith until others had it, and now his own was confirmed by theirs.⁸

Expansion

As John Wesley continued to meet with success in his preaching, he worked hard also at the task of developing an army of lay assistants whom he assigned from place to place and as new need arose. He organized societies, which were subdivided into classes. He developed a whole new hierarchy within his own organization, which grew into a well-knit, highly efficient structure. In the Minutes of the Conference he conducted

⁷Halevy, p. 57.

⁸Outler, p. 17.

on June 28, 1744, we find a glimpse into the manner in which the Societies and classes were formed.

The United Societies (which are the largest of all) consist of awakened persons. Part of these, who are supposed to have remission of sins, are more closely united in the Bands. Those in the Bands who seem to walk in the light of God compose the select Societies. Those of them who have made shipwreck of the faith meet apart as Penitents.⁹

It was clear that here was an innovation in ministry. It was a concept of ministry that was built around a body of people, performing ministry as a team, with Wesley and his top lieutenants at the head. It became the nucleus of United Methodist connectionalism, with the growth of the Conference system.

Ministry in United Methodism

This would seem to be a natural place in which to begin consideration of the United Methodist concept of ministry.

The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church defines ministry forcefully in relation to its biblical origin, particularly through the life and ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It states:

Ministry in the Christian church is derived from the ministry of Christ, the ministry of the Father through the Incarnate Son by the Holy Spirit. It is a ministry bestowed upon and required of the entire Church. All Christians are called to ministry, and theirs is a ministry of the people of God within the community of faith, and in the world. Members of the United Methodist Church receive this gift of ministry in company with all Christians and sincerely hope to continue and extend it in the world for which Christ lived, died and lives

⁹Ibid., p. 143.

again. The United Methodist Church believes that Baptism, confirmation and responsible membership in the Church are visible signs of acceptance of this ministry.¹⁰

The Serving Community

United Methodism understands ministry in a general as well as in a particular way. In a general way, it perceives ministry to be the gift of Christ to all who are partakers of the new covenant in Jesus' blood, his death and his resurrection. When we become members of the church we not only receive the assurance of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. We also become a part of the covenant community in which God accepts and nurtures us and from which we draw power for service and ministry to the whole world. It is through the community that we are made accountable to God and become involved in a ministry which is not our own making, but Christ's. In other words, we can only become ministers when we are part of a covenant community, for that community of faith has a ministry that is distinguishable from the ministry of individual members, as that of those who belong to the ordained ministry, but which is still one with all of them and are together in Christ Jesus.

Loyalty and a sense of accountability to the community not only sustains individual members because of the benefits that accrue them individually, but also to the community, as it continues to be a cove-

¹⁰The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 1976), p. 166.

nant community through which others and the world might find blessings (Genesis 22:18). This is why John Wesley continued to take pains to maintain the relationship between the United Societies and the established church throughout all the controversy that surrounded his work when the church hierarchy rejected his work, and even continued to be a loyal member of the Church of England until the end.¹¹

Therefore, as we become part of the covenant community and seek to believe and obey God's call to salvation in Christ Jesus, we become "ministers of Christ's righteousness."¹² The very heart of that ministry is none other than Christ himself, in whom the love of God came to the world in a unique way.¹³ Christ came not to be served, but to serve. (Mark 10:45). And he also said, "I came that they might have life and have it more abundantly."¹⁴ Paul states, "For the divine nature was his from the first; yet he did not think to snatch at equality with God, but made himself nothing, assuming the nature of a slave."¹⁵ Thus the Book of Discipline once again:

All Christian ministry is Christ's ministry of outreaching love. The Christian church, as the Body of Christ, is that community whose members share both his mind and mission. The heart of... the ministry is a life of gratitude and devotion, witness and service, celebration and discipleship.¹⁶

Without Limits

As Christ is the heart of the Christian message and missional

¹¹Outler, p. 26.

¹³ibid. p. 106

¹⁵Phil. 2:7.

¹²Book of Discipline, p. 105

¹⁴John 10:10

¹⁶Book of Discipline, p. 104

enterprise, as United Methodists understand it, so the whole world is its focus. It knows no limits and respects no boundaries. The gospel writer declared, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."¹⁷ God also loves the church, built upon him who is the only proper foundation of it, is empowered for the task and gift of ministry. Indeed, it is the covenant community that abounds in the talents and variety of gifts of those that are faithful in its fellowship, more so than they are themselves individually.

Ministry of all Believers

The Protestant Reformation rediscovered for all of us the ministry of all believers. Following in that important rediscovery, The United Methodist Church can state categorically:

The people of God are the Church made visible in the world. It is they who must convince the world of the reality of the gospel or leave it unconvinced. There can be no evasion or delegation of this responsibility; the church is either faithful as a witnessing or serving community, or it loses its vitality and its impact on an unbelieving world.¹⁸

Ministry is a corporate responsibility, but initiative in it is an individual response to the promptings of the Spirit.

Diaconal Ministry

There may be those in the church who wish to be engaged in a

¹⁷John 3:17 (RSV).

¹⁸Book of Discipline, p. 106.

life of full time ministry of love, justice and service. They are thus consecrated, not ordained, as a recognition of God's call and of the individual's response to that call. The consecration is thus the church's certification of such persons for designated service and mission. Such persons are recommended for the Annual Conference for consecration, through the Board of Diaconal Ministry, after they have met the personal, spiritual, educational and professional qualifications required.¹⁹

Ordained Ministry

Finally, we have in the church those "called to specialized ministries of Word, Sacrament and Order--the ordained clergy." The Book of Discipline continues,

Such callings, we believe, are evidenced by special gifts, graces, and promise of usefulness. Through these distinctive functions ordained ministers devote themselves wholly to the work of the church and to the upbuilding of the general ministry. They do this through careful study of the Scripture and its faithful interpretation, through effective proclamation of the gospel and responsible administration of the Sacraments, through diligent pastoral leadership of their congregations for faithful discipleship, and by following the guidance of the Holy Spirit in witnessing beyond the congregation in the local community and to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:18). The ordained ministry is defined by its intentionally representative character, by its passion for the hallowing of life, and by its concern to link all local ministries with the widest boundaries of the Christian community.²⁰

In addition to the above, there are other features of United Methodist

¹⁹Ibid., p. 107.

²⁰Ibid., p. 106, para. IV.

understanding of the Christian ministry, to which I now wish to turn before concluding this section.

Connectionalism

The concept of connectionalism is clearly spelled out in the total life, the structure and organization, and permeates the whole United Methodist system, its life of service and ministry and the way it conducts its far flung missionary enterprise. It is the system of linkages of structure and offices in United Methodism. But it is more than that. For through it the gift of ministry is shared and distributed, and accountability is assured. It is a necessary outgrowth of the itinerant system employed by John Wesley, in which his preachers traveled far and wide from station to station, with no permanent local church assignment over extended periods of time.

Basic in this system is the Annual Conference. Indeed, the law of the church declares it to be the "basic body in the Church."²¹ Before the creation or organization of any other unit in United Methodism there was already a function "Conference" in the sense of a body of preachers who were ready to go out to any new assignment at a moment's notice.

When Otterbein and Asbury met in Annual Conference with the early preachers in America, there was more substance to the Annual Conference than there is to the idea of a local church. That is, the preachers were itinerants, moving from place to place, preaching to groups of people who came to hear them. These groups later became societies and then local churches,

²¹Ibid., p. 37, para. VII.

but at the beginning they were just groups of people who came to hear an itinerant preacher. So the Annual Conference has a certain primacy in United Methodist history; it was not a gathering of local churches, but a body of preachers under orders.²²

There are other parts of the connectional structure, but space and purpose limits treatment only to basic aspects of the concept and to the Annual Conference, within the scope of this project.

The Superintendency

The superintendency is one major feature of the connectional system. The nature and purpose of this important office in the church is delineated in the Discipline:

The task of superintending in The United Methodist Church resides in the office of bishop and extends to the district superintendent, with each possessing distinct responsibilities. From apostolic times, certain ordained persons have been entrusted with the particular task of superintending. Those who superintend carry primary responsibility for ordering the life of the Church. It is their task to enlighten the gathered Church to worship and to evangelize faithfully.²³

The Discipline also provides guidelines for the task of superintending, under the triple heading of mode, pace and skill. Under mode, the church has in mind intentionality, style of leadership as active and aggressive, not passive, and general participation in the shaping of history and reality. This happens in a prophetic style of leadership that is able not only to read the signs of the times, but

²²Jack M. Tuell, The Organization of The United Methodist Church (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1977), p. 32.

²³Book of Discipline, p. 501.

translates possibilities and consensus into what the Discipline calls "living tradition." Under pace, the church has in mind the development of accountability procedures. This includes the development of support groups through which ownership not only of the task of ministry but also of the task of leadership might be fostered among those with whom leadership is exercised. Then, finally, the heading of skill refers to such substantive matters as spiritual discipline, theological reflection, and the ability to build community and instill a sense of oneness and unity in members of the community. It also includes the ability to translate ideas into designs for action and ministry, translate needs into tasks for ministry and develop resources that are needed for the use of the covenant community.

To summarize, the United Methodist understanding of ministry is catholic in concept, biblical in content and theology, relevant and open in its outlook. It finds its unity in Christ, whose alone is the ministry itself, as it seeks to affirm the diversity of gifts for ministry in the Body of Christ, which it seeks as a church faithfully to be a real participant.

Nature of Ministry

The foregoing section on the historical account of United Methodism, and its concept of ministry and organization is crucial in the understanding of ministry for our own day, particularly for Filipinos in southern California and, for that matter, the whole church. It is also basic and fundamental in understanding a theology of ministry. For the birth of United Methodism has demonstrated the inescapable fact that

when we are confronted by the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, we are led to a knowledge of ourselves and of God himself. The activity of proclaiming that relationship then becomes ministry, and the emerging understanding of that activity and relationship produces theology. It is in this regard that United Methodism has been particularly blessed by rooting ministry in the biblical, which is to say revelation, and thus it became relevant without being pragmatic. I believe that to be faithful the covenant community must embody in itself a ministry that is practical and relevant without being utilitarian and pragmatic, and theologically sound because it is founded on the revelation and self-disclosure of God in Jesus Christ.

As Christ's own ministry is unfolded and proclaimed, the Church discovers its own ministry, and its members their own ministry. Christ continually discloses his ministry in concrete situations. This disclosure is the source of all true innovations and creativity in ministry. Thus dogma does not stifle but stimulates creativity.²⁴

One other point needs to be made. Just as revelation is the basis for ministry, and ministry is the activity which has to do with man's articulation and proclamation of God's self-disclosure, so does ministry become the basis for the formation of the church. That is, it precedes and determines or shapes the Church. Without proclamation there is no experience of grace and reconciliation, for sinners need to hear the Word, as Paul reminds us in his letter to the Romans.

The holy Spirit unites the doing of ministry to the ministry which has already been accomplished in Christ, establishing a reciprocity between dogma and experience which continually discloses and disciplines. There is disclosed to the Church

²⁴Ray S. Anderson (ed.) Theological Foundations for Ministry (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), p. 8.

the nature of ministry in the context of its own situation. There are different ministries even as there are different gifts to the Church, but all ministries are forms of Christ's ministry, even as all gifts of the Spirit come from the same Spirit. The experiential component in ministry is necessary to identify and confirm gifts for ministry.²⁵

This brings us back to where we begun. I had hoped to make the point in this whole chapter that God was at work in the formation of the United Methodist Church. This was manifested in its concern as a church for the personal experience of grace, in the proclaiming of the Word even in the face of a hostile environment, the formation of community, and the development of life in discipleship and in obedience to the self-disclosure of God. It was also manifested in its own peculiar concept of ministry through the Conference, the development of connectionalism, but above all, for the place which it has as a church accorded the Holy Spirit in its continuing life.

²⁵Ibid.

Chapter 3

ETHNIC DIVERSITY, THE CAUCUSES AND UNITED METHODISM

Ethnic Diversity

There are two important facts about The United Methodist Church today that have a direct bearing upon this particular project. These are the resurgence of the ethnic minority groups that provide a wide variety and diversity to its membership and the tremendous influence which the various caucuses continue to exert in its total ministry.

The United Methodist Church is today known as the only religious or denominational body anywhere whose membership closely resembles or parallels the ethnic diversity of the United States. It is a class by itself among all churches. It has therefore a unique opportunity, as well as a responsibility to discover ways not only of making sure that that diversity becomes an asset, but also of assuring the integrity of that diversity be preserved not only for itself but for the larger community as well, that is, the nation and the whole world. For indeed it was to the whole world that God sent His only Son that through him it might be saved, and John Wesley, the founder of United Methodism himself has said, "The world is my parish." As John Wesley and his followers proclaimed their message of universal salvation, people of all walks of life responded to the new message. The oppressed, the dispossessed, the poor and the powerless, first in England and then throughout the world found in the church that soon emerged a new hope, and the dawning of a new day. Salvation, he proclaimed, is available now, and

is offered to all men everywhere.

It is not something at a distance: it is present thing; a blessing which, through the free mercy of God, ye are now in possession of. Nay, the words may be rendered and that with equal propriety, "Ye have been saved": so that the salvation which is here spoken of might be extended to the entire work of God, from the first dawning of grace in the soul, till it is consummated in glory.¹

But something happened on the way from a legalistic Christian message to true universalism and inclusiveness. It has been held up by a strange new agenda.

The full realization of pluralism has been blocked in the history of this country and of the church by the American ideal of assimilation. "Americanization" has been the process by which ethnic minorities adopt the culture, values and lifestyles of the Anglo-American majority rather than maintaining their ethnic distinctiveness.²

Fortunately, the power of the gospel cannot be diverted for too long. The achievement of a truly pluralistic church has finally become the focus of ministry, and properly so. Whereas in the past, Anglo-American culture has been the norm, and all others had to adopt to it in the so called melting pot theory of social structure, that has now been considered inadequate in the rediscovery of the so called unmelttable ethnics during the decade of the seventies.

¹John Wesley, Standard Sermons (London: Epworth Press, 1956) 1, 41, quoted in Colin Williams, John Wesley's Theology Today (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1960), p.41.

²General Board of Discipleship, Ethnic Minorities in the United Methodist Church (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1976) p. 1.

Michael Novak, one of the most prominent voices concerning this issue in our time, writes,

No one ethnic group speaks for America. Each of us becomes aware of her own partial standpoint. For it is in possessing our own particularity that we come to feel at home with ourselves and are best able to enter into communion with others, freely giving and receiving of each other. The point of becoming ethnically alert and self-possessed is not self-enclosure; it is genuine community, honest and unpretending.³

It will be a sad day when the church fails to realize and actualize the promise of a truly inclusive community. But it will be a worse tragedy if, in the face of incontrovertible facts that uphold the need for inclusiveness within the church and of true pluralism, the church should fail to be honest with itself by failing to make a real effort at becoming truly inclusive and pluralistic.

Unmeltable Ethnics

I would now like to take a close look at the major elements of the cultural diversity that have come to enable the United Methodist Church to make an effort to be honest with itself. I will deal with them within the limited scope of this project, with emphasis on their self-understanding, dealing last of all with the Asian-American, which, I believe should get a slightly better treatment because it is more directly related to my own sub-group, namely, the Filipino.

³Michael Novak, The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics (New York: Macmillan, 1971), p. xvi.

The Native American

When the new International School of Native American Studies was launched last October (1978) at Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Missouri, The United Methodist Church may have been able to move years ahead of other denominations in regard to Native American ministries. It was a right step in the right direction long overdue. Ms. Diane Moats, Executive Director of Ethnic Planning and Strategy Department of the Pacific and Southwest Annual Conference, and a member of ISNAM's Board of Directors, said:

It is a new day for Native Americans. It is the only center of its kind anywhere and of any denomination. And it is a new day for the Church, too, because we are finally involved in a serious effort in this particular area of Native American ministries that will enable us to move with comprehensive style of approach.⁴

The school was the last of four such centers for each of the major ethnic groups in the church to be set up in selected regions of the country. The Blacks had theirs first, followed by the Asians and the Hispanics in Evanston, Claremont and Dallas, respectively. Somehow that fact of its being the last of them to be set up is not accidental. It is one more in a whole set of things indicative of the actual condition of the Native American today both in the national community as well as in the church.

The first Americans--the Indians--are the most depressed and most isolated group in our nation. On virtually every scale of measurement--employment, income, education, health--the condition of the Indian people ranks at the bottom...⁵

⁴Diane Moats, Personal Interview, February 12, 1979.

⁵General Board of Discipleship, p. 19.

There are supposedly 800,000 Native Americans in this country today. However, Ms. Moats indicates that the figures being used today in regard to Native Americans are inaccurate and misleading. She says that in actuality the Native American population is shrinking largely because of conditions fostered by so called family planning practices of the Federal government in Indian reservations. Because of this, she asserts that the Native Americans will be worse off than they are now in relationship to the other ethnic minorities in America. Furthermore, there simply are no human resources that are comparable to that of, say, the Asian-American through the process of immigration, not to speak of any resources for upward mobility.

Native American suffering in this country is only too well known and does not need recital here. Suffice it to say that that suffering was a result not of sporadic attempts and threats against the Indian lifestyle by the white man, but indeed from a systematic process of insensitivity, oppression and treatment as less than human. Indian lands were taken away from them as they were uprooted from their communities and were required to resettle elsewhere, to make way for the westward push of the white man. In the face of all of this, the Native American has survived albeit in a condition which no other ethnic minority today has undergone.

It would not be too much to say that the Native Americans have survived because they are deeply religious. Since their lands have been taken away from them, "religion"...is perhaps the only possession which gives them insulation against massive culture shock of the last three centuries...⁶

⁶Ibid., p. 21

United Methodism, through the work of the early settlers and missionaries, has been active in Indian work. John and Charles Wesley came to America to Christianize the Indians. And most of the ministry extended to the Indians was largely European in its basic theological assumptions and did not take seriously the lifestyle of the Indian. As a result, the church is guilty of a serious insensitivity toward the Indian peoples, especially during the time when it tried to stamp out Indian culture by enforcing usually narrow concepts of the Christian tradition as when, for example ethnic celebrations, dancing, and other aspects of Indian symbols and rituals were forbidden.

The attitude of the church today toward the Native Americans has not changed much from that of the early colonists. They are still looked upon as a people with primitive practices and rituals, and with very little kinship between their religious practices with that of the Christian religion. They are still looked at as objects of mission. Despite official claims that the United Methodist Church has the largest Native American constituency of any church, United Methodist work has not gone past the missionary Conference stage. That means that membership in such a Conference is second rate, and the salary levels of its ministry substandard. A friend of mine, the Rev. Harry Long, who has had a long tenure of service in the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference and had served as one of that Conference's district superintendents, could not be eligible as a regular member of this Conference. When all his qualifications were evaluated he did qualify as an associate member, which is considerably less than what his former status used to be in the former or previous conference. As if to dramatize the seeming

inequality I, who am from a place 10,000 miles away and have been here just a few years had had no difficulty getting in, with my years of service in my previous Conference counted in and made part of my years of service in this Conference.

Nevertheless, Native American involvement in the United Methodist Church is real, particularly through the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference. In the Pacific and Southwest Annual Conference, San Diego and Los Angeles constitute the bulk of ministry to this ethnic group, with other program and community development work in Arizona as well that are supported by the Conference. It was from one of those program concerns where Diane Moats came to Los Angeles, to head up the department that handles this Conference's ministry relating to ethnic minorities.

An important point needs to be made that, of all the ethnic minority groups, it is the Native American which probably has the best potential contribution to make to the church and the community at large in regard to contemporary issues of ecology and the dwindling resources for human survival.

Finally, in understanding the Native American, it is important to remember that the same issues of self-determination, cultural affirmation and the securing of basic needs and rights hold true and no less than in other ethnic groups, including the whites. On the whole, survival of the larger community of the church depends on the survival of the least of its parts. Christ himself reminds us all of this when he said to his disciples: "In as much as you did it unto the least of these, you have done it unto me." (Matthew 25:40 RSV).

The Hispanic Americans

The Hispanic Americans are a blending of various cultural strains, beginning with the interpenetration of the ancient Aztec and Spanish civilizations. The process of intermingling of Indian, Spanish and even African heritages produced a strain that could no longer be identified as solely one or the other. It became a new classification which is now known as Hispanic American.

There are three major elements of the Hispanic American, namely, the Mexican American, which is by far the largest group; the Puerto Ricans who, unlike any of the three, are United States citizens, who entered the United States as spoils of war after the defeat of Spain during the Spanish-American war in 1898. (This was the same year when the Philippines were ceded to the United States by Spain at the Treaty of Paris). The Cubans are the third largest group. They came into the country as political refugees, fleeing Fidel Castro when his successful revolution roared through that island nation.

Because of the divergent economic and political backgrounds of these groups, there is continuing tension among them. I remember a conversation I had with the Rev. Elias Galvan when he and I were involved in laying the groundwork for a Filipino Caucus back in 1973. He himself was born in Mexico but came to the United States as a young boy and was thus raised in California. He spoke to me of the middle class profile of the Cubans in this country but who, because of seeming preferential treatment by the government on account of their refugee status, they constantly arouse the jealousy and irritation of other Hispanic Americans. At the same time, he spoke of the growing tension within the Mexican

American community because of the failure to find a viable solution to the immigration question. He maintains that while it is true that a lot of Mexican Americans come into the country illegally, they continue to do so not only because of poor economic conditions at home, but also because of the growing feeling that America, too, belongs to them. In the case of the Puerto Ricans, they simply stayed on as part of the United States, in spite of persistent nationalistic agitation at home and continued polarization with respect to the independence question. This is quite in direct contrast to the Philippines which became independent in 1946.

In addition to the three major groups, there is a sprinkling of others from the rest of the countries that comprise the South Americas. All together they comprise the second largest ethnic minority group in America, with 12 million strong. Because of high birth rate they soon will become the biggest ethnic group. About 60,000 of them are in The United Methodist Church, almost half of whom are in the Rio Grande Conference, about 15,000 in Puerto Rico Conference and the rest scattered throughout the country.

The Rev. Jose Moreno Fernandez, with whom I have had extensive contacts in connection with this project, has provided me with significant insights into the condition of the Hispanic Americans. He spoke to me of the Hispanics' sense of dignidad or dignity as a primarily important aspect of their sense of values. He says that it is out of this that machismo comes, although it is mostly misunderstood. Furthermore, he asserts that the Hispanic has a basically religious view of life, one which is deeply reverent of nature as part of God's creation. And

he declares that it is this religious view of life that informs and shapes the Hispanics' understanding of the world and of community.⁷ This explains, he says, why Hispanics value good personal relationship above that of possession or personal advantage. I saw in those traits he described much of what I can identify with as an Asian American, which have been enriched even more by my stay and ministry in Hawaii a few years ago.

Another Hispanic American pastor, the Rev. Leo Nieto, formerly of the General Board of Global Ministries in New York and now a minister in this Conference (Pacific & Southwest) and is in charge of the Hispanic Ministry of Presence, South Bay, indicates to me the highly conscious liberation theology oriented stance of Hispanic Americans. He mentioned the fact that the success of Cesar Chavez, whom he has supported by walking with him up and down the various plantations helping him organize, was and is due in part to the religious and theological base of his community organizing efforts.⁸ Both Mr. Fernandez and Mr. Nieto agree that one of the most important issues they face as a group in the church is that of acceptance. "We just simply continue to be considered second rate United Methodists. We often wonder how truly connectional our church is", they say. I wish to close this section with a statement by Josafat Curti, who said:

When we see Anglo American Methodists, we see co-members...

⁷Personal Interview with the Rev. Jose Moreno Fernandez.

⁸Personal Interview with the Rev. Leo Nieto, San Pedro, Ca.

We see them as part of us and we hope that they will see us as part of The (United) Methodist Church...⁹

The Blacks

The Black Americans require a consideration of complex issues and conditions for which I do not have the facility and which may be beyond the scope of this project. However, I would like to deal with them here in relation to a few statements that seem to touch upon the very center of the Black experience and issues.

There are a number of significant aspects that form the core of the Black American experience. In the first place, there is a vitality in that experience that is unique among ethnic minorities because it seems that it was born out of the oppressive conditions in which this particular ethnic group found himself, not in spite of it. That vitality is explained by the religious response to his oppressive history. Consequently, the church occupies a major role in the community, and the minister occupies a specially significant responsibility for the stability of the black community.

The church was a part of the people; their spirit, culture, talents and skills were reflected throughout its structure. The strength of the black church, as a unifying force in the black communities, was evident to white interests...¹⁰

If that is the case, why is it necessary then to have the ethnic minority local church, particularly the black local church emphasis

⁹Josafat Curti, Tape, as quoted in General Board of Discipleship, p. 46.

¹⁰Consultation on the Ethnic Minority Local Church in The United Methodist Church, Report, (St. Louis: General Council on Ministries, Dec. 1, 1975) p. 20.

for empowerment? The answer is simple. For the Black church, as well as for other minorities, the church's effort and ministry has simply not given minority ministries the commensurate interest in relation to its potential for growth, development and service, and has deprived the total church a fuller witness.

There is urgent need for Blacks in the United States and the United Methodist Church to affirm their unique identity, heritage, and contributions--and to be affirmed. The Black struggle for liberation and self-determination is continuing into the last quarter of the twentieth century, and time is running out...¹¹

The Rev. Woodie W. White, Executive of the General Commission on Religion and Race, agrees. He says, "If United Methodism is to make a significant impact on the minority communities of the United States, it will be primarily through the ministry of the ethnic congregations."¹²

The Asian Americans

As I prepared to pack up my things from my former church appointment in downtown Los Angeles to go to the new one, an Anglo friend of mine came to me and, with real or feigned agony on her face, asked me, "Are you really interested in the formation of a Filipino congregation?" After recovering from the initial shock when I said that I was, she said: "But why think of living in America when you are not willing to take up American ways?" She did not bother to ask me why I felt so strongly about what I did. She just assumed that because I was able to

¹¹Douglass E. Fitch, Board of Higher Education and Ministry A Proposal to the Council of Bishops from Black Methodists for Church Renewal (April 1975), p. 7, as quoted in General Board of Discipleship, p. 68.

¹²ibid.

operate fairly easily and effectively within the white church structure, i had already abandoned my own ethnic aspirations, or even perhaps forsaken my identity with the community which is there although largely invisible. But that is part of the reason, namely, that while I was able to function fairly comfortably within the white structure, there was another community structure which, although it is invisible to the larger community, was nevertheless real to me and to which I owed tremendous loyalty.

Most of us Asians, particularly Filipinos, live in a condition of schizophrenia in varying degrees of severity with respect to the oppressive attitude that as "strangers" we must adopt to the ways of the dominant majority in this country. Never mind that we are loyal citizens of the United States, never mind that we are contributors to the social processes, we will be less than we are if or unless we did not adopt white American ways. The tragedy is that we even try to do so, and sometimes too hard. For all our efforts we could only become poor imitations of the real thing, and then we have also lost something else besides: our identity.

This is the very same condition, the very same oppressive attitude which our forefathers suffered under in early days of Asian immigration into this country.

In one of the workshops during the first National Consultation of Asian Americans held in San Francisco, December 4-11, 1978, the Rev. Sam S. Wong, a staff member of the General Commission on Religion and Race, who was handling the said workshop declared that we Asians have also been victims of oppression in this country no less than the Blacks

or the native Americans. Most members of the workshop, who were middle class young adults from the eastern seaboard and the midwest, with a sprinkling of new immigrants, were visibly surprised. They simply did not know much about even their own background and the struggle of their forbears in this country. Those who have been raised here in public schools and in predominantly white communities just did not have had the opportunity to know much of what really transpired. As minority people they have naturally been ignored, and their own background neglected so that it would be up to them and their own initiative to find out for themselves. And this did not happen. Small wonder then that most Americans "are unaware of the history of racism and oppression that Asian people have suffered in America."¹³ And Asian Americans have quietly borne and repressed, rather than shout, their story partly because of their peculiar history that takes a dim view of complaints, and puts a high value on quiet suffering and patience. But the historical facts are there for all to see, and today we wonder how our forbears endured the racism, oppression, exclusion, exploitation, confinement and even murder and massacre.

The first Asian immigrants, the Chinese, came in 1848, finding refuge here from the Taiping rebellion back home. Persecution began for them almost immediately. For one thing, they came to California in time for the gold rush. But unlike their European counterparts, who could take any available work, they were eligible only as indentured

¹³General Board of Discipleship, p.3.

servants to the miners. In 1856 the foreign Miner's Tax law was passed, which prevented them from panning for gold. In 1859 Chinese were excluded from the San Francisco Public school system. In 1870, Chinese were excluded from eligibility for citizenship all together, and the law also prohibited the wives of Chinese laborers from entering the United States. This was followed in 1892 and 1902 by Congressional Acts prohibiting the further immigration of Chinese and their naturalization.

The oppressive measures were deliberate, persistent and systematic. Indeed, it was not confined to the Chinese, but it included all other Asians, since they all share the same strange grouping and classification by the dominant whites. By 1906, all Asians were put into a separate Oriental Public School system in San Francisco, and the state of California passed an antimiscegenation law forbidding the intermarriages between whites and "mongolians", which is anyone of Asian descent. (This law was not changed until 1950 when the U.S. Supreme Court finally declared it unconstitutional). In 1910 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the extension of the 1870 Naturalization Act to apply to all Asians. And in 1924, the Exclusionary Immigration Act completely ended Asian immigration all together. And while the Filipinos were exempt, they were ineligible for citizenship unless they served in the U.S. Navy for three years. That meant being a steward or worse for three years, since it was rare, indeed, to find an instance where a Filipino was promoted beyond the menial duties.

That was not enough. While legal exclusionary acts were being set up systematically, race riots, burnings, lootings and murder were being perpetrated against people of Asian descent, often with little or

no interference from law enforcement agencies.

The ultimate action in the long and consistent history of oppression took place in 1942. This was the time when, through Executive Order 9066, all people of Japanese descent, many of whom were United States citizens, were herded into concentration camps in various places in California and elsewhere in the midwest.

In spite of all these, the Asian Americans suffered in silence and born their pains and hurts in quietness. It is significant that throughout the whole period of oppression from 1848 when the first Chinese arrived, until 1950 when the McCarran Walter Act was passed by the Congress, a little over 100 years, (the law the enabled Asians born overseas to become citizens), there is no record of the Asians having ever been involved in any acts of resistance or been guilty of disloyalty to the United States. The Japanese proved to be a formidable group in war; the Filipinos, during World War II, with valor and courage as a people in the face of great odds and with almost unbelievable capacity for sacrifice, cast their lot with Americans against the Japanese imperial army in Asia; and the Chinese gave themselves to the task of quietly helping win the West and tame the wilderness.

Asians went through a process of assimilation in order to become accepted by American society. The churches provided a dual role as a locus of nurture and cultural affirmation, as well as a means for their acceptance by society in general.¹⁴

¹⁴ibid., p. 6.

Where We Are Today

The conditions under which Asian Americans find themselves today are very similar to that of their forebears. When they are not being ignored, they are being stereotyped. But things are beginning to change.

The public media in the United States continue to portray Asians stereotypically as sly, demonic enemies of the country, subservient houseboys and laundrymen, or as karate-wielding "supermen" ...Even well educated professionals of Asian descent are often forced into menial jobs. Professional persons, such as ministers and teachers, often must accept work as janitors and waitresses.¹⁵

When it comes to the church, the needs have not changed much. The basic needs of fellowship and mutual support, and the needs for a genuine community to take place are still there. It thus provides a place in which the family can be truly together, since church for Asians is basically a family affair.

A new development is emerging in the fact that there is a great sense of unity and identity among Asians both in the separate and individual groupings as well as within the wider, larger Asian community. This is a result of the work of the caucus movement. Asians are beginning to assertive about their needs and concerns. There is some ambivalence for this because Asians now see the value of their heritage of patience and silence. At the same time, as they discover that the dominant society rewards individuals for their individualism, assertiveness and candor,

¹⁵ Ibid.

and skill in competition, they are led to seek to play the rules of the game and are forced to find a synthesis between assertiveness and the age-old traits of grace, charm, peace and conciliation. This is where they very well may make a greater contribution to the life not only of the church but of the nation as a whole.

Chapter 4

THE CAUCUSES AND A PLURALISTIC CHURCH MINISTRY

For some 600 Asian American United Methodists from all over the country, the first National Convocation of Asian American United Methodists was an experience never to be forgotten for a long, long time. It was held in San Francisco December 4-11, 1978, at Glide Memorial Methodist Church, where the National Federation of Asian American United Methodists has its headquarters. It was planned and carried out with Asian American United Methodist leadership with very limited resources of time and money.

Cultural Affirmation

One of the things that made the experience especially significant was the evidences which were made obvious throughout the Convocation of a feeling of ethnic affirmation. In the banquet and celebration that was held at the San Francisco Hilton December 8th, the Honorable Norman Mineta, a Japanese American and member of the United States Congress from San Jose, California, declared:

I am proud to be a Japanese American as well as a United Methodist...Let us uphold our church by affirming our ethnic identities.¹

During the cultural celebration that followed, the various ethnic subgroups within the Caucus contributed presentations derived from their particular backgrounds. When the turn came to the Filipinos to make

¹Norman Y. Mineta, Tape of Address to the National Consultation of Asian American United Methodists, San Francisco, December 8, 1978.

their presentation, I was a little concerned that we will be a disappointment because only a few people joined in the rehearsal that afternoon. But a hundred Filipinos stood up, rehearsal or no, and had some difficulty fitting into the little stage of the banquet hall; and we made our own presentation, which was a medley of Philippine ballads and folk songs. When we got to the second song, the whole banquet stood up in a roar of applause and started singing and swinging with us. What they did not understand in words they did in rhythm and in tune. It was a tremendous experience in affirmation. It was true also of the other groups. It was just fantastic. And as I reflected on the whole experience, I felt that that experience would not have been possible ten years ago before the advent of the caucus movement. But now it has come to pass both for the individual ethnic groups themselves on a regional and national basis, as well as for the larger Asian American community.

What a Caucus Is

Today many people in our churches still are unclear about the relationship between the Caucus movement and the regular church structure even if a decade has gone by since we first began to have them around. It is therefore necessary to keep reminding ourselves what the caucus is and what it is not and the creative tension that exists between the two. This is important and necessary if the church is to fully benefit from the caucus and, conversely, if the caucus is to benefit so that there would be an experience of growth by all.

Professor William Shinto, Western Region Consultant to United Ministries in Higher Education, in attempting to define caucus, said:

The "caucus" is a group of like-minded persons who by-pass regular channels of authority to goad organizations to accept responsibility for caucus concerns. They claim the support of the churches and the communities, but the critical fact about this is that the caucus moves without the consensus of the congregations...It is an important breakthrough in liberation...on the basis of values rather than consensus....²

In other words, a caucus is a loose grouping of people that are committed to a common cause. In addition, they seek a course of action on the basis of values that require a sense of urgency, which will then constitute authority for the action being sought. The controversial element is that in which the caucus goads regularly organized structures of authority to accept ownership of their (caucus) concerns or issues as when the Blacks made their historic demand for reparations from churches across the nation in the 1960s. It is a highly political process which, at times, offends the sensibilities of those who are used to transact business on the basis of consensus or the Robert's Rules of Order. It is clearly a process that puts values and people above the concern for the smooth operation of duly organized structures.

Where the Caucuses Are

There are caucuses in all the mainline Protestant denominations today. And within United Methodism, all the four major ethnic groups, namely, the Blacks, the Asian Americans, the Hispanics and the Native Americans have their organized caucus. Moreover, they do not only have organized caucuses, but have also been accepted as part of the total

²William Shinto, Address to Asian American United Methodist Caucus, in Roy Sano (Comp.) Theologies of Asian American & Pacific Peoples (Berkeley: Asian Center for Theology & Strategies, 1976), p. 5.

A Role for the Caucuses

In the light of events within the last decade, and in view of the developments within the ethnic minority communities, one may very well consider the question legitimately, "Where does this lead to?" What profitable role can the caucuses possibly assume?

It is my contention that the caucuses are here to stay. This is so because the role they have come to assume is one which none can more efficiently administer or else it would not have come to pass at all especially in a church as the United Methodist Church already is.

The Prophetic Responsibility

The foregoing stance would serve to indicate the most important role for the caucuses today. That role is the prophetic task. Roy Sano, of the Pacific School of Religion and founder of the Pacific and Asian Center for Theology and Strategies, states it rather forcefully:

The task of explaining history helps explain one of the most important functions of the Christian churches for all immigrant groups in America. The churches provided the history of the Hebrews as a mythic pattern for the immigrants to make sense of their labors and hopes. They too left their homes as did Abraham, uncertain about his destination. They, too, would resist their oppressive Pharaohs as did Moses who liberated his people from bondage. They too would endure the long trek through the barren wastelands as did the children of Israel. They too would toughen themselves for their conquests as did the children of Israel...³

³Roy Sano, "Cultural Genocide and Cultural Liberation Through Amerasian Protestantism" in his Theologies of Asian American and Pacific Peoples (Berkeley: Pacific Asian Center for Theologies & Strategies, 1976) p. 29.

Just as the prophet interpreted history for Israel, so today does the caucus interpret the events of our day in order to enable the church to be accountable to its calling and in order that those of us in the church might be able to chart a course of action that is consistent with the gospel.

But the prophetic role, so Roy Sano contends, is grossly inadequate because it is useful only where the caucus finds accommodation within regular structures. He sees a lessening of that accommodation in the years ahead and, when that happens, he asks, what then?

Asian American churches and other ethnic minorities inside and outside the church will take the apocalyptic tradition more seriously in the days ahead. It is not enough to be priestly, pastoral, and prophetic...the very system we sought to penetrate is crumbling...the treasure chests we have tried to crack open may prove to be whitened sepulchres containing decayed remains of past greatness...⁴

I find myself in complete agreement and wonder if, in our current preoccupation with seeking the fulfillment of our hopes of liberation, based on agendas set by the agitation of the sixties; I wonder if amidst the seeming false hopes of our current struggles, we can see the handwritings on the wall.

The Caucuses and Pluralism

I would like to turn now to a brief discussion of the development of a pluralistic ministry in our church, and the role which the caucuses play towards that development. It is a role that is limited by the very

⁴Ibid., pp. 41,42.

nature of the caucus itself, but it is an important one nevertheless.

As a matter of intent and general policy, the church is committed to inclusiveness and pluralism. This is expressed first of all in the organic law of the church, particularly after merger in 1968.

Inclusiveness of the Church. The United Methodist Church is a part of the Church Universal which is one Body in Christ. Therefore, all persons, without regard to race, color, national origin, or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its worship services, to participate in its programs, and, when they take the appropriate vows, to be admitted into its membership in any local church of the connection. In the United Methodist Church no Conference or other organizational unit of the Church shall be structured so as to exclude any member or any constituent body of the Church because of race, color, natural origin, or economic condition.⁵

In order to understand what our church means by inclusiveness and pluralism, we need to spell out the various aspects of that policy. For we are not talking about the old melting pot theory, or a situation in which we combine all racial groupings together where ethnic lines are made conspicuous by neglect. By inclusiveness our church means the sharing of power and leadership in the decision-making processes of our church which, in the past, have been dominated by Anglo and Euro-Americans. It also means the fostering of a spirit and sense of ownership among all ethnic minorities for and of all levels of our church ministry. It involves a sensitivity about all of the hurts and needs of various constituencies within the church, and the willingness to affirm one another in the midst of the vast diversity that characterizes us as a church.

One of the ways in which the church has sought to implement an

⁵The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 1976), p. 21.

inclusive stance in ministry was the designation by the 1976 General Conference in Portland of the Ethnic Minority Local Church one of the three quadrennial emphases, along with Evangelism and Hunger. With regard to that particular emphasis, the General Conference has allocated \$5 million in new monies each for the quadrennium. The formula of implementation is complex, but a good example to illustrate how this emphasis could serve the purpose of inclusiveness in the church, is what is termed "salary supplements." Through the emphasis, the general church is now raising money which would otherwise not be available, that would be given to areas where help is needed in order to raise the so called minimum salary of ministers who work in hardship areas or appointments. Another good illustration is the fact that, through funds made available under this emphasis, the Pacific and Southwest Annual Conference now receives matching funds in the area of congregational development, thus making it possible to fund what we have come to know as the Ministries of Presence, which is a mission oriented and evangelistic program. They are basically innovative, ethnic ministries, and it is in one of those where I now find myself happily involved.

The preceding discussion of the evolution of our church policy toward a sensitivity to ethnic minorities as a result of an accommodation by the regular structure for the caucuses illustrates that caucuses indeed are workable models and are effective catalysts in ministry.

To further illustrate the effectiveness of the caucus in bringing about a desired result, I would like to deal here with the way in which the Commission on Religion and Race was established through the efforts of Black Methodists for Church Renewal in the 1960s.

1968 General Conference

When the General Conference of 1968 convened in April of that year in Dallas, Texas, the nation was still stunned by the recent assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The death of that great church leader and the convening of the General Conference constituted a dramatic situation of a crisis and an opportunity, especially with the emergence of a new church, The United Methodist Church.

In the church's Constitution that subsequently became part of the new church, pluralism and inclusiveness were both affirmed as a matter of priority. However, the structure of the past still remained, including racially segregated Conferences within the Central Jurisdiction, thus the issue of mergers. The attitude of racism also remained, and that had to be dealt with and changed. Thus the need to confront unchristian orientation in all its forms, and eradicate the evils of institutional racism.

This was the setting that produced an opportunity for the Black Caucus to challenge the new church to create a new agency which became the Commission on Religion and Race. The idea initiated by members of the BMCR soon gained support from a large number of prominent delegates to the General Conference. The key issue at that time was the orderly merger of black and white conferences in the Southeastern and South, and in the other jurisdictions as well. This concern was broadened to include fair, meaningful and significant participation of black United Methodists throughout the entire life of the church, in boards and agencies and in annual conferences, in places of leadership, in policy-making po-

sitions and in the programs of the church.

The Commission on Interjurisdictional Relations, which was in charge with the responsibility of assisting in the merger process then became the new Commission on Religion and Race, with a budget of \$700,000.00. That was for the quadrennium 1968-72.

The success of the blacks demonstrated to the other ethnic minority groups the viability of organizing themselves. It was the blacks, therefore, who blazed a trail for all others to follow in what has now come to be known as the caucus movement, not only within the United Methodist Church, but in other denominations as well.

The development of the caucus movement demonstrates the need for minorities not to rely on the goodwill and good intentions of the dominant group in the articulation and shaping of goals and directions. It demonstrates the need for intentionality, and deliberateness in regard to the accomplishment of desired changes. Above all, it demonstrated that God, indeed, can use our efforts in order to bring about His will in and through us in the church and in community.

Chapter 5

THE GOSPEL AND THE CAUCUS: A SYNTHESIS

And what there is to conquer
 By strength and submission, has already been
 discovered
 Once or twice, or several times, by men and whom one
 cannot hope
 To emulate--but there is no competition--
 There is only the fight to recover what has been lost
 And found and lost again and again...¹

I have assumed in this project the validity of the liberation theme, which sustains and informs the agenda of the ethnic minority groups and the various caucuses. For the emergence of the power and influence of the caucuses, as well as the resurgence of the various ethnic minority groups, at least within the church, are not only welcome phenomena, but must also be recognized as necessary to the oneness of the church of which Paul spoke and wrote about in of his letters, saying,

...there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all. (Col. 3:11 RSV).

In doing this I have sought to affirm that the liberation stance of what might be considered the theological base of caucus activism is a positive development toward the creation of a responsible community and personhood. Indeed we do battle not with localized demons but with principalities and powers manifested through dehumanizing conditions of life and the oppressive realities of our day.

¹T.S. Eliot, "East Coker" in his Four Quartets (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1943) as quoted in Walter Wink, The Bible in Human Transformation (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p.80

I have not only assumed it, but indeed, I have participated in some small measure in the struggle to create a situation in which liberation might be possible, but also one in which the articulation of that liberation might take place within the existential and relative situations in which we as ethnic minorities find ourselves today.

Liberation Theology

In the task of ministry within the caucuses, therefore, liberation theology is of utmost importance. Without it, the caucuses will be but a case of the proverbial tail wagging the dog. But there is a sense in which without it, if we did not have liberation theology already, we would probably have to create it, given the human condition and the recognition that God presides over history. As long as there is the possibility of rebirth and renewal for the human condition, and as long as that possibility is a gift of grace and not mere human achievement, liberation theology will be found useful and helpful.

Liberation is...a childbirth, and a painful one. The man who emerges is a new man, viable only as the oppressor-oppressed is superseded by the humanization of all men. Or to put it another way, the solution of this contradiction is born in the labor which brings into the world this new man; no longer oppressor nor longer oppressed, but man in the process of achieving freedom.²

In other words, as liberation is a painful process, one does not rush headlong into it. One does not even rush headlong into plans and strategies for action. For liberation touches upon the very intimate,

²Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (New York: Seabury Press, 1970), p.34-35.

and therefore intricate, aspects of our daily existencies and relationships, and we do not trust or rely as much on brawn or muscle power as we do in the understanding of relationships, of meaning and of ultimates. We do not depend on the realities of mere flesh and blood as we do depend on the mechanics of the human spirit. Rosemary Radford Reuther says it much more beautifully:

Liberation for the oppressed...is experienced as a veritable resurrection of the self. Liberation is a violent exorcism of demons of self-hatred and self-destruction which have possessed them and the resurrection of autonomy and self-esteem, as well as the discovery of a new power and possibility of community with their own brothers in suffering.³

Liberation theology simply affirms the Pauline assertion that God "has not left himself without witness." (Acts 14:17). And as God spoke to Moses through the burning bush, so God can speak today to us through the wild crashing and tumbling of oppressive dictatorships, the eradication of racism, and the flowering of the ghettos as fit places for human habitation.

Historical Figures

The liberation stance of the basis for caucus thinking and programmatic structures reminds us that this is not exactly without precedent in historical reality. One does not have to be an historical scholar to discern the fact that the Wesleyan movement, in its own right,

³Rosemary Radford Reuther, Liberation Theology (New York: Paulist Press, 1972) p. 12.

was a liberation movement, par excellence. The Methodist Societies themselves, in spite of the traditional ecclesiastical context within which they are normally viewed, were no less of a caucus than, say, the Black, Native American, Hispanic or Asian American. Perhaps they were less politicised than the usual run of caucuses that obtain in our day. But that is the nature of history. They were informed by a different set of data and, therefore, dealt with a different set of problems. The criticism that was normally level against them, which was enthusiasm, could easily be translated into the kind of criticism that is leveled against minority caucuses today, particularly where there is much to be said about being too controversial. Nevertheless, in so far as a caucus is a group of like-minded persons that are committed to an ideal, and seeking accountability of the larger community for their agenda, as the caucuses are today, the Wesleyan movement, as it began through the British Methodist societies, cannot but be viewed in the same light. One of the critical points is that John Wesley had a chance to assume his father's cure in Epworth. That he rejected it in favor of staying with the Holy Club, on the ground that he preferred to maintain himself in "corporate, religious rule"⁴ is evidence of his instincts for a caucus orientation. They, too, had their own caucus agenda in holy living, in an age which was not exactly in the middle of a massive Billy Graham evangelistic crusade. The revival was not going to be until years later. If a case of the faithful remnant had not rubbed off on the Holy Club

⁴Albert C. Outler (ed.) John Wesley (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964) p. 89.

because it has forced the issue of the restatement of the gospel message so forcefully with their impact in history, I believe the same could be argued about today's caucus movement, not for what it has already done but because of its promise, based on its motivation.

Strong Concerns

It would perhaps be unfair to equate or compare the beginnings of the United Methodist Church with that of our present-day caucus movement. My real concern is where the Wesleyan movement parts company with our present movement and that is where the realm of the personal, existential world of reality. The Wesleyan movement's commitment was to proclaim the revelation of God in Jesus Christ in the process of which it created community. I have begun to feel uncomfortable about the seeming tendency of the caucus to affirm change at all costs. I am afraid that in our passion to break down oppression, we might lose community at the same time without much else to replace it, and suffer the loss of the personal dimension as well, if we fail to uphold the one central consideration which is the fact that the ministry is God's alone in Jesus Christ. Roy Sano, who is perhaps one of the most articulate voices today among ethnic minorities within the United Methodist Church has this to say about the matter. He asserts that the biblical figures of pastor, priest and prophet are inadequate for the powerless, the disadvantaged or dispossessed, arguing that those figures are useful only in so far as one is within the establishment. Therefore he contends for a more adequate figure and joins other liberation theologians in opting for the apocalyptic vision. He writes:

The apocalyptic vision may lead us to see that the very system we sought to penetrate is crumbling; the 'sacred cow' we tried to milk may become very dry shortly. Or, to change the figure of speech, the "treasure chests" we have tried to crack open may prove to be whited sepulchres containing decayed remains of past greatness. If that is not the case, we should make these events transpire.⁵

I have no quarrel, basically, with the apocalyptic vision, because it may very well be the only way open for much of the conditions that obtain today among our third world peoples. But putting it that way smacks too much of the 'end justifies the means' syndrome. And my question would be whether or not in using apocalyptic vision as a politicising tool, as it were, as the only use for it, it would not be a gross distortion of the gospel message that there is rejoicing in heaven over one sinner that repents. (Luke 15:7).

Overworking Change

I would argue for less preoccupation with change as such. This I do not because I dislike change as a matter of course. But if in large measure the gospel came in the midst of oppression to an oppressed people, we need to remember, perhaps rediscover, how the gospel indeed came and effected change. It was not the band of disciples storming Rome in order to make it accountable that did the trick. It was the death and resurrection of one among an oppressed minority; and the ministry that arose out of the proclamation of that event that broke down op-

⁵Roy Sano, "Cultural Genocide and Cultural Liberation Through Amerasian Protestantism" in his Theologies of Asian American and Pacific Peoples (Berkeley: Pacific Asian Center for Theology and Strategies, 1976) p. 43.

pression of peoples and brought about the liberation of persons from the clutches of sin and death. The idea of spokesmen or symbolic figures around whom we might rally for change seems extraneous within the biblical context, where there is no time to loose and where the proclamation of the good news of salvation of persons and communities is a task in which all share.

So from a strategy of change and a ministry of change agents, I would make a plea for an option in which we are able to combine that passion for the change of social structures with a passion for human and Christian relationships; the rediscovery of the art of being a part of the processes of changing lives and making them whole even within the limits of oppressed conditions and not be content in leaving that task to our modern-day priests and priestesses, the psychiatrists, psychologists or marriage and family counselors.

Concern for Balance

In view of the concern not to overwork the "liberator" theme in the ethnic minority movement, and in view of my concern in this project for emphasis in the development of other aspects of the liberating process and task, I would like to see more concern for the existential and devotional as means of bringing about wholeness and bridging the gap between the act of effecting liberation and the experience of liberation as an experience of the grace of God.

As ethnic minorities, we need to come face to face with ourselves and not just be preoccupied in imputing blame on others for our situation no matter what happens and whether or not that is true. For even in the

presence of our modern-day Moseses we cannot be freed against our own wills. That is where freedom first must happen. And given the necessary openness to grace and the Spirit, we may receive freedom and all the benefits and possibilities of faith, even under the heavy yoke of oppression, in the midst of which we can compose our own songs of praise and engage in our peculiar way the opportunity of living the faith "once delivered to the saints."

Chapter 6

THE FILIPINO CAUCUS AS MINISTRY

When the Filipino Caucus of the Pacific and Southwest Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church met January 21, 1979 at Torrance, California, one of the most important things it did was to approve a statement that touches upon its task. The statement reads in part:

...affirm that there are two divisions set up under our Constitution and By-Laws, and those...are church and evangelistic growth on the one hand and social and community services on the other...neither one nor the other should receive a disproportionate amount of emphasis at any one time by our Caucus...Our Conference awaits us to continue articulating in a positive manner and in a most creative way various other needs of our church and community. We need to speak out constructively and deal most vigorously with issues like ministerial recruitment, evangelistic outreach, cultural affirmation, and the positive use of our ethnic and cultural heritage as creative expressions of the Christian faith (through us).¹

The statement would not have been possible seven years ago, before the creation of the Caucus. It became possible only through a growing sense of intentionality on the part of Filipinos. And this is something that needs to be encouraged among Filipinos because of the absence of an ethnically conscious church community among them that could cater to their just spiritual and human aspirations as a group.

Because of the nature of the task that the Filipino Caucus has come to be related to, it seems necessary to bring into focus its history

¹Issues and Strategies Committee, "Report to the Caucus", January 21, 1979, p. 1.

in some limited detail, in order to understand the rationale for the development of a design for an intentional and holistic approach to this particular type of ministry, and see it as a whole and in its own way.

The Filipino Caucus and the Caucus Movement

The coming of the 1970s saw the emergence of the caucus movement on a national scale. This was true within the United Methodist Church. What started out as a struggle against racial injustice by Blacks, first in the South and then nationally soon snowballed into a nationwide Civil Rights movement. All the rest of us in the church, where the movement was born, then began to be involved and benefit from it: the Hispanics, Native Americans, Asians and Pacific Islanders. Various caucuses were thus formed. The Blacks did so first by the organization of BMCR (Black Methodists for Church Renewal). Then the Hispanics came up with MARCHA -Methodists Associated to Represent the Cause of Hispanic Americans. The Native Americans formed the American Indian Caucus and the Asians the National Federation of Asian American United Methodists. The last one, the Asians, formed theirs out of a meeting that was held in Santa Monica, California in 1968, composed of Filipinos, Chinese, Japanese and Koreans and Formosans, a process that took several years before finally coming up with a national federation.

The United Methodist Church tolerated and even encouraged the development of the caucus movement. Initial funds needed to come together in various convocations and consultations, at least in the case of the Asian Americans, were provided by the church through appropriate boards and agencies, including the Board of Global Ministries, the Commission

on Religion and Race, the Board of Church and Society, the Board of Higher Education and Ministry and the Board of Discipleship. It also had the full support of the General Council on Ministries and the Council of Bishops, by means of funding assistance of various amounts, as well as participation of regular staff from most if not all of those boards and agencies. The reason for this widespread support is that, although the caucus movement is not and cannot be a regular part of the church structurally, caucuses have come to be viewed as a means for greater inclusiveness. They have come to be viewed as helping the church in the task of lessening alienation and fostering a greater attitude of ownership on the part of the ethnic minorities toward the Church in general.

One of the important factors about the various ethnic caucuses was the emergence of a clear pattern of leadership. There emerged certain powerful figures within the movement, whose power and authority were based not just on charisma but on vision and the ability to articulate that vision and capture the imagination of the powerless, the oppressed, the dispossessed and the alienated. That is how Martin Luther King, Jr. became a powerful force and symbol not only within the black community but throughout the world of the best in leadership. As a graduate student in the South in the late 1960s, I have been a witness to some of the ways in which he was able to help provide vision upon which to base his positive activism. The same is also true of Cesar Chavez here in Mexican American country, as exemplified in the watchword, "Si, si puede." To some extent the same is true of the pattern that developed within the Asian American caucus, although it was more diffused because

of the heterogenous character of the Asian American group. People like Peter Chen, Lloyd Wake, George Nishikawa and Wilbur Choy, Stanley de Pano and Jonah Chang were caught up in the vision of what the Asian American community can and must be and articulated it to bring us where we are now.

Los Angeles: Initial Strategies

Meanwhile, the increase of Filipinos in the West, especially in California, began to grow even faster because of a new amendment to the law regarding immigration, which has now come to be known as Public Law 89-236, of the Immigration and Nationality Act, passed in 1965. Many who are arriving in the United States among Filipinos are not only skilled professionals but church goers as well. A great many of them are United Methodists, whose presence was beginning to be felt among the churches around the metropolitan Los Angeles area and environs.

In 1972, with the help and guidance of Elias Galvan, then Executive Director of the Conference's Ethnic Planning and Strategy department, an effort was committed to deal with the Filipino situation. Initial discussions were made with the cooperation of ministers in the area serving churches that have Filipino constituents, including Richard Edgar of Rosewood, Don Boyd of Los Angeles First, Burley Howe of Echo Park and Frank Argelander of Wilmington First. Those discussions saw the organization of what was called Filipino Strategy Group. That group convened at Wilmington First in June, 1972 and formally organized itself. Fritz Acuna, a layman from Rosewood became the group's first President; Marcelino Quizon from First Church Los Angeles, Vice-President, and

Estefania Ancheta, who was at that time a member of Echo Park, Secretary-Treasurer. Jose Movido was designated coordinator of volunteers, and Ben Vinluan was elected adviser. After a few months the newly elected President had to relocate out of state and, in a new election held in March, 1973, Ben Vinluan was chosen to head the fledgling organization.

Foundations for Watersheds

Those first months were most frustrating and difficult, plagued by interminable meetings, characterized by heated debates on whether or not the organization was needed at all. Some became less enthused and we soon lost a number of the people that supported it in the beginning, including Ruben Eugenio of First Church Los Angeles. Those that remained continued to meet and were able to develop a set of priorities, based on a model presented by Ben Vinluan from his experience in a similar work in Hawaii, and a superficial survey of needs in the area. The fostering of a broader fellowship of Filipino United Methodists, immigrant service concerns and evangelism emerged as priorities. And in order to facilitate better understanding of the nature of the organization, it took out a new name of Bayanihan Filipino Caucus.

The new name had identification advantage, although a bit of a tongue twister to others in the church. It stayed on because it articulated the purpose of the organization in some cryptic way. Bayanihan, indeed, referred to the spirit of cooperative endeavor among all Filipino dialect groups, and using it here enabled Filipinos to have the opportunity to share with others outside the Filipino cultural heritage some-

thing of its richness. Things were beginning to happen. The organization was going to move and grow.

Grant for Self-Determination

During 1973, Echo Park United Methodist Church submitted a proposal to the General Commission on Religion and Race for funds that would let it minister more fully to Filipinos. The Commission disapproved it on the grounds that it was too localized a project to fall within the guidelines for grants from the Commission. However, it had very significant elements that are important for self-determination of ethnic groups. Echo Park then appealed to the Caucus for help. Elias Galvan of Ethnic Planning and Strategy was able to ascertain that it might be funded if it could be rewritten to fit into the broader category, making it a project of the Caucus. The rewritten proposal became more comprehensive, with Ben Vinluan the new contact person. The Commission approved the proposal for a total of \$17,000, to be given on a graduated basis for a period of three years. This grant proved to be one of the watershed moments of the new organization, as we shall deal with later.

Community Developer Project

The Caucus started its community developer program when funds from the Ethnic Minority Self-Determination Fund of the Commission on Religion and Race were made available that following year. On January 15, 1974, Bienvenido Lorenzo, formerly of the YMCA in the Philippines and who just graduated from Scarritt College for Christian Workers, in

Nashville, was hired. He began to explore possibilities for youth ministry, enabled the Caucus to participate in the Conference's first Asian American Camp, and helped in the continuing process of developing priorities. Unfortunately, just as he was getting his feet wet and into the swing of things, the need and the opportunity to relocate in Canada intervened for him, and by the end of that year we were without a Community Developer.

The Caucus then decided to make the position a parttime one, in order to attract qualified candidates who were otherwise unable to serve if the job were full time. Jose Movido came into the picture. He was a student at Claremont at the time and serving as parttime assistant at Echo Park. With some assistance from his devoted wife, Petra, he began as parttime Community Developer of the Caucus in late spring, 1975. He managed to link up with the Los Angeles city welfare program, and a social worker was made available to the Caucus once a week to help with eligibility applications. Romeo Abesamis had, by that time, become the new President of the Caucus, a term to which he was reelected once to last until the end of 1976.

Instructive Events

Events that took place during this period are instructive. One example took place on Good Friday, 1975. Before that actually took place, there had been considerable anger on various quarters about the move of the Caucus headquarters from First Church Los Angeles to Echo Park. It was done with no clear mandate from the Executive Council. At

the instigation of those interested in the move, Bien Lorenzo effected it before moving to Canada by having the telephone service cut and ordering one for the new location, all without the knowledge of the Council as such. In a separate development, but not entirely unrelated to the Caucus, a new ad hoc group was formed to pursue the Caucus aims that were seemingly neglected by the incumbent leadership, such as advocacy and empowerment, congregational development, and to keep alive the linkages between the Caucus and the structure and machinery of the church. The ad hoc group came to be viewed in a negative light. It sought to be supportive of the total caucus effort, but it was seen to be otherwise. Then Bishop Granadosin of the Philippines stopped over from a meeting of the Council of Bishops. His coming to Los Angeles had previously been arranged by Vinluan while still a chairperson of the Caucus. When he came, therefore, many saw the opportunity to forge a unity within the caucus through the weight of his office and also of his personal magnetism as a leader in the church. He lodged in a local motel, and a meeting of the Caucus leadership was thus arranged, including Vinluan, Movido, Abesamis, Tacadena, Ancheta and a few others. However, it was soon made clear that somebody might have taken it upon himself to use the meeting for some other purpose. At the appointed time, Bishop Granadosin's room was jammed with people. Instead of unity, the purpose of the meeting soon became a demand for an explanation for the aims of the ad hoc group. That was easily done. But the explanation did not satisfy certain persons, and who demanded the resignation of Estefania Ancheta from her office as Treasurer of the Caucus. That she refused to do, for it was an inappropriate demand. The Chairman was asked, 'not to exceed'

his authority. The meeting failed to forge a unity, although it succeeded in partly clearing the air for the whole caucus.

Closing Ranks

The need to move forward, however, was paramount in the minds of all. Time and, with it, the changes that come along, helped bring about the softening of sharp differences. The ad hoc group continued to function and be supported by enabling the Caucus committee on Issues and Strategies to work for the development of priorities, recommendations and new proposals. A feeling of achievement was shared in the assignment of Jose Movido, after graduation at Claremont and subsequent ordination as a Deacon, to full time pastorate at Asbury. That left open the Community Developer position. Romeo del Rosario, back from Boston, having just finished his course for the Ph.D. but short of the degree on account of his dissertation, was then promptly hired in the summer of 1976.

Additional funds were obtained from the Conference through the Metropolitan Urban Mission to augment the fast dwindling funds of the Caucus. This was a result of proposals submitted in late 1976. Only left over funds remained as the sole resource of the Caucus, and now new moneis were coming in.

The year 1977 was the election of a new set of officers for the Caucus. Esteban Calma and Pet Movido were elected Vice-President and Secretary, respectively, and Aurora Garcia, Treasurer, to serve with Ben Vinluan, who was once again elected President. Congregational Development received top priority, along with Ministry of Presence for Long

Beach and San Diego. With Ben Vinluan and Romeo del Rosario as leaders in the development of a model, a workshop in Christian Education was held for Filipinos and Hispanics, with personnel and other resources coming from the General Board of Discipleship through Afrie Songco Joye as well as the Conference Board of Discipleship through Mrs. Myrtle Caliva.

A New Approach

But one of the most far reaching achievements of the Caucus in its six-year existence was the approval by the Board of Global Ministries in the summer of 1977 of the proposal for the creation of a Ministry of Presence for Filipinos in the Long Beach District. It started out as a concern of the leaders of Wilmington First Church to provide adequate ministry for the growing constituency in the area. It was soon made clear to them, however, as in the previous instance with Echo Park, that the Conference and the General Board of Global Ministries would only provide funding if it was made broader based and more comprehensive in its scope as a ministry. The Caucus provided that broader base and thus became one of its top priorities. Del Rosario as Community Developer made a survey of needs and, with Vinluan, wrote the proposal with the cooperation of the District Superintendent, Bob Kesler, and some help from Truman Barrett of Torrance First. When it was approved, Salvador Sarmiento, who succeeded Vinluan in January, 1978 as Caucus President, declared, "This is one of the best achievements of the Filipino Caucus." Funds were made available as of July, 1978, when Bishop Charles F. Golden appointed Vivencio L. Vinluan in charge of the new Ministry of Pres-

ence for Filipinos, a first for this particular ethnic group.

Renewed Emphasis on Goal

When the Community Developer position once more became vacant last summer (1978) as Romeo del Rosario moved into full time pastorate, the Caucus once again considered it important to fill the position. The personnel committee chaired by Vinluan, which had the responsibility of looking for a suitable replacement, believed found its man in Paul Blanco. He comes to the Caucus through the YMCA, first in the Philippines, then later in Geneva as former assistant general secretary for development, where he served for two years.

For the last couple of years emphasis has been heavy on church ministry strategies within the Caucus. There are those who have come to feel that this needs to be corrected, and renew emphasis on community and outreach ministries. At the same time, the Caucus, more than ever before, feels the pinch for funds, with the phasing out of grants through Metropolitan Urban Mission. But Blanco sees it as an opportunity to go after other sources. Romeo Abesamis and Camilo Graza and others in the Caucus see the occasion an opportunity to cast out into new directions. A new move was therefore made in late 1978 to create within the Caucus a corporate entity as a means to go after funds that might not be otherwise possible, with the state and county considered as possible new sources. So with these considerations, and despite the realities of Proposition 13, the Filipino Outreach Center, Inc. was brought into being, conceivably as the nerve center for the social and community outreach aspects of the ministry of the Caucus.

No Longer Unnecessary

What has the Filipino Caucus accomplished? After six years of existence, the Caucus cannot point to any earth-shaking achievements. No spectacular changes had been wrought. But it can no longer be said that it is unnecessary as some did in the beginning. It has demonstrated that in the absence of a Filipino local church or churches, it can and had been a locus for ministry in the community.

For one thing, it has provided a means by which the church and its leaders can reach the Filipino community. This is a quality that sets us off as unique among other Filipino organizations and among other Asian groups. At the same time, the Caucus has become the forum by which issues might be shared in both dialogue and resolution. It has also provided a means by which leadership might be developed through affirmation and advocacy. This, in turn, is made possible because the Caucus provides a sense of community. It has thus made it possible for the Filipino to be more visible both in church and hopefully in the community at large.

What of the future? As long as the community is together, and we trust that has been helped through the presence of the Filipino Caucus, the future will take care of itself.

Chapter 7

THE NEED FOR AN INTENTIONAL MINISTRY WITH FILIPINOS

In one of the United Methodist churches in the metropolitan Los Angeles area, a few weeks ago, I went to worship unannounced and unbeknownst to the pastor. He did not happen to know me, nor did he have any idea who and what I was, although I am a member of the same Conference as he is. I have been going from church to church making my survey in connection with my new assignment as Minister of Presence for Filipinos, and also in connection with this project. The church was only half-full. Out front were seated white members of the church. And at the right rear corner, seated by themselves--young and old alike were Filipinos, many of whom I have known before. Following the worship, I filed away along with the white members down to where the pastor stood greeting members as they left church. And after I shook his hand, I waited a little hoping to see some of the Filipinos to visit with them a little. But none of them came. They had all disappeared. So I rushed out to the parking lot and, sure enough, there they were! They had gone out of their corner after worship, and out to the parking lot by a convenient back door, without anybody greeting them or having a chance to greet anybody else. And they were supposed to be full members of the church!

I felt very sad. I felt even more sad when I thought of the fact that that situation is normative in many, many churches every Sunday throughout southern California. This is supposed to be the seat of the most ethnically diverse Conference in all of United Methodism. With a

few exceptions what I saw was a sad commentary of the fact that pluralism and inclusiveness remain an ideal, not an actuality or even design not only in the United Methodist Church but perhaps also throughout the whole church establishment. And that is why I long to see the beginnings of an intentional ministry with Filipinos, in much the same manner as the various other ethnic minority groups have a ministry in their own peculiar way within the church today.

Statistics

Let me deal briefly with some relevant statistics. Current projections indicate that by 1980 the "Pilipino will be the biggest Asian group" in America.¹ In a survey in December, 1977, in Long Beach district, Filipinos constitute just about 3% of the total district membership of 18,000, or roughly 250 Filipino United Methodists who are actively involved in the church's life. They are surpassed only by the Japanese who have a fully developed ministry. Filipinos arrive from the Philippines daily and many settle in southern California. And a high percentage of those soon are able to buy their homes after an average of two years. Jobs, the climate and the presence of relatives are reasons given by people for settling here in southern California. Excellent schools, both elementary, high school and college, and the usually high percentage of ethnic minority groups are other reasons. Thus ethnic unity, education and health are deemed important. Add to

¹Lemuel Ignacio, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (Is There Such An Ethnic Group?) (San Jose: Pilipino Development Associates, 1976) p. 222

that the fact that Los Angeles area Filipinos who live in apartments average just about two years before buying their own home, most of whom will look for their first house in the south bay because of jobs, and other related reasons.

The situation in the Los Angeles city churches is basically the same, but it varies at some points. There a downtown cluster of churches have an estimated 1500 membership and constituency of Filipinos, with Rosewood, Asbury, and First Los Angeles leading in their attraction to Filipinos.

The case of First United Methodist Church of Los Angeles is instructive. From a handful of Filipinos there in 1972, that ethnic group rose to a number about 40% of the total membership of the church, or 65% of the total church attendance by 1977. The reason for this is not hard to find. In 1972, the pastor-parish relations committee got a recommendation approved by the charge conference to go ahead and forge an effort to intentionally reach out to the Filipino community by hiring an associate who is a Filipino. Consequently, I was assigned there by Bishop Kennedy. This move did two things. First, it gave the Filipino community an entre and ready access to the church and, two, it enabled the congregation to have an opportunity to affirm an ethnic person as part of its total ministry. There was the important element of intentionality.

At Asbury United Methodist Church, located just at the edges of downtown Los Angeles, there has been a significant degree of growth within the last three years. Beginning with the pastorate of Jose Movido, but especially now through the ministry of Esteban Calma, there has been

a concerted effort to reach out to the Filipino community. This has been to an extent never done before, that the church is reaching out to unchurched and non-Protestant Filipinos. The result has been borne out consistently through greater participation by a greater number of people. And it has demonstrated the fact that as the church reaches out to people with the powerful message of the grace of God, persons listen and respond in faith and with changed lives, and are made whole and strengthened with the power of salvation.

Rosewood church may be a different case all together. There despite the absence of a Filipino minister or associate, Filipinos continue to grow in numbers. This is perhaps due to the growing lay leadership within the Filipino group itself. But certainly it is also because in previous years that church's ministry, through a really able pastoral leadership, has attracted Filipinos. Thus relatives and friends of those who have joined the church earlier join its fellowship as they arrive as new immigrants. As they join the fellowship, they satisfy their need for a community and, at the same time, satisfy their nostalgic feeling of a pleasant relationship, back home, between themselves and the missionary who has been a part of the so called special relationship as in earlier days. It is a relationship with certain clear demarcation lines and where the Filipino freely operates as long as he is within the set guidelines, but never as an initiator or innovator. He has certain prescribed roles, but may not prescribe for the rest of the church as such. But there are signs that this may also be changing.

The present Conference cabinet leadership has shown sensitivity to the situation, especially of the Filipino as the only ethnic group

within the bounds of the Conference that so far has not develop congregations of its own. In view of the limited number of Filipino ministerial leadership, the cabinet has seen it fit in recent years to assign pastors that are sensitive to the Filipino presence wherever that may be. In spite of this, they are few and far between who are truly sensitive to this particular aspect of ministry. The Rev. N. Robert Kesler, District Superintendent of the Long Beach District, in a conversation with me in speaking of the sensitivity of a particular pastor in one of the churches, said, "He is truly one of the best pastors we have in terms of sensitivity to the ethnic dimension of ministry. Unfortunately, we do not have too many of them."² And that itself is a whole set of problems that reaches into the structure of the church which has for its root the evil of racism itself.

In order to document the need for an intentional ministry with Filipinos, the Filipino Caucus developed an instrument that has been used several times. The instrument has enabled us to find out that Filipinos put the church at the top of their priority. It exploded for us the myth that religion is lost in the race to make a living. This is shown by the 82% that went to church. And "those who went to church for less than every Sunday did so not by reason of choice but because of the demands which jobs or vocation place upon them and their families."³

²N. Robert Kesler, Personal Interview on January 15, 1979.

³Committee on Issues & Strategies, "A Report" (Los Angeles: Filipino Caucus, 1976) p. 5.

Religion and the church continue high in the Filipino scale, despite certain urgent needs and cultural shock.

Along with this must also be considered the fact that today there are an estimated 300,000 Filipinos in southern California. There is a fertile opportunity for ministry. Yet in this Conference there are only six Filipino ministerial members. Of the six, one is in Hawaii, two are serving predominantly white congregations; two serve churches with a large number of Filipinos, and one direct the first and only Ministry of Presence for Filipinos. In addition, one needs to consider also that in one predominantly Filipino church, an Asian but non-Filipino has been assigned, along with the fact that in another situation where Filipinos are predominant(Rosewood), an Anglo has been assigned.

Jose Movido, Jr., in his thesis entitled "Co-Existence as a Strategy of Empowerment in American Churches" has described some models that were currently in use at the time (1976) and affirmed the so called co-existence model. This is where Filipino group exists side by side with an Anglo group within the same church, where they can help each other directly in order to survive as an institution. In this case, the Filipino group functions with some element of ministry, but not as a separate congregation.⁴ Mention has also been made by him of the integrated model, with which he also identifies, but I find myself unable to do the same wholeheartedly because it is where Filipinos become brown members

⁴Jose Movido, Jr. "Co-Existence as a Strategy of Empowerment in American Churches" (Doctoral Dissertation, School of Theology at Claremont, 1976) p. 55,f.

seeking to be whites in an Anglo setting. This perhaps is the most readily available model primarily because it lends itself to the traditionally close relationship between Americans and Filipinos along with its colonial implications. Its rationale finds expression in planned get-togethers in so called multi-cultural celebrations and sharing of cultural heritages which, in most instances, are food and folk dances, normally done by the ethnics for the benefit of the whites. Consider one of these celebrations:

Last year St. Paul's church in Oxnard threw a party to celebrate its uniqueness as a multi-ethnic church. It was so successful we decided to do it again this year. We chose the theme "Celebrating our Ethnic Heritages." Food booths, entertainment and crafts plus gifts from over sixty developing nations through Church World Service were the day's offerings..Young people and adults danced the traditional dances of the Philippines. Young people from El Buen Pastor in Santa Paula entertained us with songs in Spanish. Children and adults participated in ethnic crafts such as Japanese Origami, or corn husk dolls from Hispanic and Native American cultures...We have chosen to use the monies this year to pay our apportionments in relationship to the ethnic minorities within our United Methodist Church. Once those obligations are paid in full any remaining money will go toward local ethnic ministries...⁵

With skillful orchestration of an ethnically integrated setting, ethnic ministries can be paid for by the labor of ethnics themselves!

The clearly inadequate dimensions of these models compel us to look to other possibilities for the sake not only of the immediate community which, in this case, is the Filipino, but also for the sake of the wider church. For up to this time, in spite of the large and increasing number of Filipinos in church and are active in its life, there still is no model that takes the Filipino really seriously, not to mention the

⁵The United Methodist Reporter, Circuit West (December 29, 1978),1.

fact that there is not one single Filipino United Methodist Church south of the Tehachapi mountains. In other words, it has failed to enable the Filipino to get hold of his cultural heritage in a conscious, intentional effort to utilize that heritage in dealing with the issues of his present existence.

Recapitulation

All this does not mean that the United Methodist Church could not take credit for the strides in ethnic minority empowerment and sensitivity to the cause of liberation. For it must be reiterated that United Methodism remains ahead in these areas. The creation of the Commission on Religion and Race in the 1960s, and its becoming a permanent commission of the church in Dallas in 1968; the birth of the Commission on the Status and Role of Women in 1976 as another permanent commission and the nature of the emphases for the current quadrennium, especially that on the crisis in the Ethnic Minority Local Church all point to a church of which we can be really proud.

Nor is this Conference, the Pacific and Southwest Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church far behind the national record. It might be said that it is ahead in many ways. For example, this Conference has anticipated the general church by more than a quadrennium in terms of concrete designs involving ethnic ministries. This is shown by the creation here in as early as 1969 of the Department of Ethnic Planning and Strategy, under the leadership of Nathaniel Lacy, Elias Galvan Bill Rollins and others. Through this department ethnic minority concerns receive undivided attention and are expedited. Concerns might still

be welcome in the normal procedures, but the presence of that particular department so assures that ethnic concerns will receive the commensurate attention they deserve and which might not be given otherwise if the department did not exist.

Since I do not intend to present a comprehensive view of the ethnic minority empowerment record of United Methodism, I just have space to mention perhaps two more of the important facts in regard to the matter of the church's record in empowerment. One of these is this Conference's creation of the Commission of Religion and Race in 1974. That commission's importance was clearly seen when, in 1975, the Conference voted for funds to allow the commission to employ an executive, and promptly hired the Reverend Charles Yue, an Asian who was at the time serving at the General Commission on Religion and Race in Washington D.C. Unfortunately, when fiscal retrenchment was necessary in early 1977 because of problems relating to Pacific Homes, ethnic minority and other aspects of ministry in the Conference that relate to controversial issues became expendable, and the program suffered a sizable cutback, although the commission continues to exist.

Another program that is worth mentioning is the Center for Asian American Ministries, which is located at the School of Theology at Claremont and functions in conjunction with the school. It is, as was mentioned elsewhere, one of four such centers throughout the country, funded by the Board of Higher Education and Ministry. The other centers, one each for the other ethnic minority groups, are located in strategic locations: at Perkins, at Garrett-Evangelical and at Kansas. Dr. Chan Hie Kim, a Korean American New Testament scholar and graduate of Van-

derbilt, heads the Asian Center. Its establishment in 1977 was the culmination of planning and cooperation between Asian leaders and the general church and is yet another evidence of the continuing sensitivity of the church to its call to be in ministry to our day.

Continuing Hostility and Misunderstanding

Despite the above developments in the church, there seems to be a continuing hesitation on the part of the church to be involved in so called ethnic minority causes and controversial issues. I have already mentioned the fact that the staff for the Conference Commission on Religion and Race had been discontinued as a result of fiscal retrenchment because, presumably, of its being identified with ethnic minority and controversial causes.

Moreover, there is a growing sentiment up and down the Conference that the attempt to accord ethnic minorities priority status in the church is, in actuality, a case of reverse discrimination. In San Pedro, California, where I maintain my office for the Ministry of Presence for Filipinos, I am face to face with the same attitude which manifests itself by means of honest questions that are asked of me during formal meetings and in informal conversations with white members. "Why" they ask me, "do you seek to segregate yourselves as ethnic minorities when all these years we have sought to integrate our churches?" This kind of question comes from lay people who are not antagonistic to the cause of ethnic minority empowerment, but who are usually sensitive to those needs and are truly and sincerely concerned. It also comes from pastors and other clergy.

Last July, one of them probably spoke for a great many pastors throughout this Conference, I am afraid, when he wrote a letter and circulated it widely throughout the Conference. One of the stimulus that produced his letter was an article I wrote in my own church paper concerning my own perceptions on my new appointment, which I entitled "Perceptions on a New Appointment", in which I expressed eager anticipation for my new appointment, and said that to me that appointment means a task that could enable and help others affirm the Filipino American experience. I had said that that is part of the gospel. This is what he said:

Our sense of purpose is confused. Our hard won unity is beginning to disappear. Our sense of direction is less certain than it was...This is at the heart of the congregational development program of the Annual Conference. This is what the "crisis" in and the promotion of the ethnic minority local church is all about....The Conference Board of Global Ministries and the Cabinet are now well into a program known as the "Ministry of Presence." Ministers were appointed under this program at the recent session of the Annual Conference. In defense of the program one of the ministers under such an appointment said, 'Persons are enabled to grow only when they are allowed to be themselves ...Does integrity mean one set of rules for one ethnic group and a different set of rules for another ethnic group? Our confused sense of direction may be due in some measure to our loss of the gospel. The New Testament really does not talk about preserving our "cultural and ethnic peculiarities intact...'⁶

I have not had any chance to write him personally. To my knowledge nobody else has sought to respond to him. I shall probably try to write him sometime. But the tone of the letter, and the fact that he is not alone makes it more imperative that an intentional ministry for Filipinos is established, and soon.

⁶Harold Johnson, "The Crisis of Clarity", An Open Letter to Conference Leaders, July 12, 1978.

Features of Intentionality

Having sought to demonstrate the need for an intentional ministry, I must now seek to spell out in some form the features of such a ministry within our Conference.

The first that needs to be said of such a ministry is that it must be faithful to the religious heritage of United Methodism. By this I mean that it must be cognizant of the early beginnings of the Church, taking into consideration especially the basic and fundamental concerns of the movement, namely, the experience of grace, disciplined living. It must, in being faithful to United Methodist beginnings, be creative in its use of our connectionalism so that that particular concept of organization and structure does not become a hindrance but an asset for an innovative servanthood.

For example, we have already seen that many Filipinos are members of white congregations. In seeking to create a ministry for Filipinos, must we seek to entice them out of their present church membership into a new situation and risk the charge of pirating members by their respective pastors? Or must one simply start from scratch? Is there any middle ground? Is it possible to utilize John Wesley's model of seeking entrance into all the churches that would take him in order that he might bring the message which he had to share? This is a possibility which I believe might be useful in terms of a new approach to ethnic ministries, especially in regard to the Filipinos.

Content and Theology

The development of an intentional ministry must reckon with content and theology. By content is meant the revelation of God as we find it in the Word revealed through Scripture. There must be a real concern about Christian dogma as the proper starting point of ministry in acknowledgement of the doctrine that it's God's very act of revelation from which salvation history begins, and not man's search, as seen in Pascal's exclamation that he would not be seeking God if God himself has not already found him.

Social Realities

United Methodism was borned with a genius for the experimental and the experiential aspects of faith. But it was also imbued with the proper sense of the need of people and communities for social structures that are responsive to change. Therefore I feel that United Methodist ministry to ethnic minorities, especially to the Filipinos in our Conference, that is intentional must be alert to various ways in which ministry might be manifested creatively in accordance with emerging social realities.

Covenant Community

To be truly intentional, this ministry will be concerned with the creation of a covenant community in which Filipinos might find free expression of their spiritual potentialities. To proclaim the Word will be irresponsible unless it is combined with the prayer and hope for the gathering in of God's people. This is true because revelation produces ministry and, if we engage in ministry we are also engaged in the crea-

tion of a covenant community, not for reasons of our own efforts nor for our own glory, not even as an ethnic community, but because ministry of the Word is productive of the community of faith.

Discipleship of Service

To be engaged in ministry is to be involved in service to the neighbor and the world. In discipleship we seek to manifest the fruits of the Spirit as means of serving our Lord through the world, and as a means of manifesting our gratitude for the work of the Spirit in us.

Having demonstrated the need for an intentional ministry, I have sought to spell out the various ways in which it might find expression in our church today. I have thus presented in some form or structure some of the features and outlines of that ministry, in response to the kind of ministry and the concept and understanding of the gospel and of the church that we find in the United Methodist Church. This is an indication of continued faith and loyalty to it as a church, but also of its continued viability in dealing with changing styles of ministry and, finally attests to the fact that in it as a church ethnic minorities can claim ownership.

Chapter 8

DESIGN FOR AN INTENTIONAL MINISTRY WITH FILIPINOS

In previous sections, I have endeavored to deal with the question of ministry through the standard United Methodist understanding of it, relating it with the political activism of the caucuses. The liberation theme of much of our day's theological enterprise is for my affirming in many ways. For one thing, it is enabling third world peoples to know that they, too, are somebody and no longer 'nobodies'. It is also enabling the majority community to rediscover ethnicity, that it is not all together "bad" and that it is liberating them from the bondage of ignorance, prejudice and bigotry.

But there is so much that is missing and I have reason to believe that liberation theology itself will not be able to cope with that situation, given the direction in which it is poised. I find missing, for instance, a genuine feel for the individual in the seemingly mad rush to effect processes for social engineering, as well as in the desire to monitor and "bird dog" social, political and church structures. This I feel to an extent that John Wesley, himself an astute social and community organizer, would have felt out of place in much that is going on today.

Let me give an illustration of this. I happen to be a member of this Conference's Commission on Religion and Race, which is a direct result of the activism of the caucuses. It is a commission that is designed to enable conferences in United Methodism to be intentional about pluralism and inclusiveness. As such, it is not by and for ethnic mino-

rities but, rather, it exists in and for the church as a whole. It is however involved in a lot of monitoring, and much of its activities are geared to the possibility of change in the areas of social and spiritual concerns, especially in regard to the eradication of racism in all its forms within the church. It has a membership of thirty and is ethnically balanced in representation.

There was an important consultation on racism held in Goleta, California in November, 1974. The whole Cabinet of the Conference, and other important leaders of the Conference, were there. Plans were made, goals were prioritized, strategies were discussed, and one would have thought that after the consultation the whole problem of racism would have been solved. I was all enthused. But when I got home with my family after the consultation, we found our apartment had been burglarized, and we were stripped of our valuables and belongings, our door destroyed by forcible entry and the whole place a shambles. Participating in the agenda of the Commission, with all its plans and strategies and rationales gave me a sense of community, although I was a little disappointed when no word of comfort was ever given by anyone from the Commission leadership. It opened my eyes to the negative possibility that we can be preoccupied with the mechanics of social change that we lose the personal and human dimension. And I resolved that in my own ministry and life that must never be allowed to happen, even if it means having to sound "fundamentalistic" or, in other words, risk eyebrows to be raised.

My conviction of a need for a more intentional and holistic ministry to the Filipino community goes deep because of this. I am more and more convinced now that, if we were to be left with nothing but the

ministrations of the caucus, we will perhaps grow into political and organizational lions but personal and spiritual lizards. There are relational and personal hungers of our hearts calling to be slaked. We need balance between political activism and personal and spiritual vitality.

Evangelistic Outreach and Preaching

My proposition and design would involve a plan of preaching that would take seriously the connectional, itinerant ministry of the church. I would propose herewith an approach in which somebody should be in charge of a cluster of churches in terms of this particular ministry. These may be white churches or otherwise. We would need to recognize that the presence of Filipinos in those churches would be a mere expediency. The itinerant in charge would be responsible in terms of pastoral care, preaching and teaching, counseling and organizing for mutual support and community service; discovering ways in which the Filipino ethnic heritage might be brought to exert an influence into creative dialogue with the host culture; cultic and priestly functions (although there is possibility for a lot of accommodation here, because of the Filipinos' facility with English).

We might need to repeat for the sake of emphasis here that the absence of a Filipino congregation is not due to a lack of interest in the church, as our Caucus survey has shown.¹ It is more an evidence of lack of urgency as a result of the lack of a personal, intentional and

¹Issues & Strategies Committee, "Report on Survey" p. 8.

holistic ministry for and with Filipinos.

Jose Movido, Jr. offers the model in which an ethnic church would simply exist side by side with the local white congregation. The mutual support for survival is central to this proposal and it has for its goal a church which is "liberated from all kinds of prejudices... begin to fill the cup of Christian brotherhood in the fulness of God's love."² I believe, however, that the motivation needs to be undergirded by normative biblical and theological motifs, as I am inclined to feel that survival merely as a social unit, nor even as a church structure is no valid motivation per se for its continued existence.

This leaves us with the Wesleyan model. Perhaps the absence of an identifiable Filipino congregation provides us with a viable rationale for such a design. Such an unofficial cluster of churches, which I have mentioned above, or perhaps subdistricts, as focus or locus for ministry, has several obvious advantages.

Consider the following for instance:

- 1) It affords identity fulfillment.
- 2) It offers a visible community link in the pastor in charge, for important informational and ministerial concerns, thus facilitating and maintaining vital communications;
- 3) Provides an opportunity for people to see connectionalism in actual operation.

Let me elaborate. In the Long Beach District, out of the 48

²Jose Salazar Movido Jr., "Co-Existence As a Strategy of Empowerment in American Churches" (Unpublished D. Min. Project, School of Theology at Claremont, 1976) p. 47.

some churches in the district today, sixteen churches, probably a few more, have Filipino members. Of those sixteen churches, two have a sizably large group of Filipinos and the rest a mere sprinkling. Without exception none of those situations or churches initiated the action that resulted in the presence of those Filipinos in them. It is my contention that, since Filipino presence in the churches is a reality despite neglect, intentional or otherwise, it must also be conversely true that an intentional ministry to them and with them in any given church grouping or cluster would result in a greater number of persons who would respond to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

For "Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved". But how are men to call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? (Romans 10:13,f. RSV).

Preacher, I believe, in this case, must refer to the intentionality of purpose; a sustained, deliberate effort or set of actions directed at a community in order to provide for it an opportunity to be confronted with the claims of Christ over all of life, including itself. Call it evangelism, if you will. But present conditions in churches simply do not include an evangelistic zeal which is similar to what brought the United Methodist Church to where it now is in stature, in strength and power in ministry in the world. We simply need to rediscover the Wesleyan evangelistic zeal, and design ways to employ it in developing an inclusive, pluralistic and evangelistic church.

One of the obvious things about this will be that it may be open to the charge of invading other people's territory, or of pirating other people's members. This will not be new. Unfortunately, we have no bet-

ter alternatives. Assimilation, integration, as well as co-existence models are all woefully inadequate and ineffective because they do not go deep into the root, namely the proper motivation for ministry.

In defense of this model, we find ourselves on rather solid ground. For had not John Wesley been involved in that kind of ministry the United Methodist Church would not be where it is today, or perhaps there may never have been one either. James Harvey, One of his former pupils at Oxford became one of his most articulate critics and both of them were engaged in a lively correspondence. In response to a letter from Harvey, John Wesley wrote on March 20, 1739, some ten months after Aldersgate:

...on scriptural grounds I do not find it hard to justify what I do. God in Scripture commands me, according to my power, to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man forbids me to do this in another man's parish; that is, in effect, (forbids me) to do it at all, seeing I have now no parish of my own, nor probably ever shall. Whom, then, shall I hear, God or man? "If it be just to obey man rather than God, judge you. A dispensation of the gospel is committed to me; and woe is me if I preach not the gospel" (cf. Acts 4:19; 1 Cor. 9:16-17) But where shall I preach it upon the principles you mention? Why, not in Europe, Asia, Africa or America; not in any of the Christian parts, at least of the habitable earth; for all of these are, after a sort, divided into parishes. If it be said, "Go back, then, to the heathens from whence you came", nay, but neither could I now (on your principles) preach to them, for all the heathens in Georgia belong to the parish either of Savannah or Frederica...Suffer me now to tell you my principles in this matter. I look upon all the world as my parish...I mean, that in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear me the glad tidings of salvation.³

³Albert C. Outler (ed.) John Wesley (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964) pp.72-73. Cf. John Wesley, Letters, I, 182; IV, 149; see also John Wesley, Life, II, 118-120; John Wesley, Works, VIII, 117-119; XIII, 235-239.

Curriculum Development and Enrichment

This professional project, which I started in 1977, has inspired my leadership stance in the Filipino caucus in the development of new models in approaching ministry. More specifically, it has spurred the development of curriculum and curriculum enrichment. As president of the caucus, I saw to the creation of a standing committee on Curriculum Development. We then went into the process of taking a look at our church's curriculum materials. We involved a number of people in this task, coming from all over the caucus. We had at least two aims in view, namely, one, we intended those people involved will become familiar with the design and content of our curriculum, the biblical orientation and the theological presuppositions and, two, by becoming familiar with the curriculum, we intended to saturate and enrich those available curriculum with elements coming from the Filipino ethnic heritage. We then developed the project into a finished product which we used for Vacation Church Schools in Los Angeles, beginning with the summer of 1977. The project was done on a Caucus basis, with the Los Angeles Metropolitan area as the base. We feel that we were successful because it enabled the people that were involved in it a sense of ownership for our United Methodist curriculum materials, and not just complain about the limited audience with which the curriculum is being written. It also gave them a sense of pride in themselves, seeing that it is possible for them to rewrite curriculum to suit the changing situations in church and community. And we felt that, because there was a greater sense of ownership of the finished product, not only by those directly involved but also

on the part of those with whom it was used, the materials were more productive of greater understanding and efficiency in teaching.

The Materials

Because of the relatively small material involved, I would like to include the more relevant aspects of that body of material here which was produced under the project. I wish here to acknowledge our profound gratitude to the Division of Education and Cultivation of the Conference Board of Discipleship which was led by Allen Moore, who has since become Chairman of the whole Board. Through their support and encouragement, we were able to obtain seed money for the project, as well as professional assistance from staff from that Board, Mrs. Myrtle T. Caliva.

CHILDREN - ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT

Day 1

God Wants Us To be Happy

Bible verses: Luke 18:15-17; Matt. 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16.

Materials: Cut-out pictures of children and families to label or match with words on pieces of cardboard--happy, sad, lonely, sick, etc..

Songs: "It's a Small World"; "Jesus Loves the Little Children"

Games: "Who Is My Neighbor"; nametags (smiling face) pinned or taped to the nearest child.

Story: Alex Found a Home

Every day Alex carried his shoe shine box, calling out to passers by, "Good shine, good shine. The best in town!" And almost always the bigger boys beat him to a customer, as Alex was a small person with shorter legs with which to run. At the end of the day, as he counted his earnings, Alex would shake his head sadly. He would return home by five in the afternoon and hand his entire earnings to his mother, who needed the money to buy their dinner. Alex did not keep a centavo for himself. His mother would oftentimes point a finger at him and remark that what he had earned was not even enough to buy his shirt or trousers, much less pay for the rent of their little apartment. Alex respected his mother so much that everytime he heard his mother say things like that, he simply bit his lips and went to sleep very sad. And each night he dreamt of going to school, but each morning he found himself on the sidewalks of the city, shouting, "Good shine, good shine!"

One day, as he was staring at the items on a newsstand, his eyes recognized some words, like "Children's Garden" on a poster. As he drew closer, he noticed that under those words were pictures of cottages and the happy faces of children. "This is where I should go", he told him-

CHILDREN - ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT

self. Immediately, he left his shoeshine box with one of his friends and off he ran to see if he could get a bus ride to Barrio Dolores, Taytay, Rizal. He knew that he was short and could ride the bus for half the fare. At the crowded bus station, he saw a bus pulling out. It was full. However, he did not give up. He told the bus conductor where he wished to go. The kind conductor replied, "Okay, hop in; there is a small box by the driver on which you could sit." When he found the little box by the driver, he took it. He knew it will not be too comfortable, but at least he wasn't standing, like many of the other passengers. When the bus dispatcher announced the bus' departure Alex just had to gather up enough courage to speak to the driver to request him to please tell him, Alex, when they reach Children's Garden. The driver said that he will. Shortly afterwards, the bus conductor came to Alex as the bus started to roll. Alex paid his fare--all the money he had. The bus passed by houses and plenty of tall trees growing beautifully on the hill sides. What a nice relief from the crowded city where he lived! All at once Alex was very happy. He breathed the nice fresh air. Then suddenly, the bus driver shouted "Children's Garden!" Alex stood up, looked out the window, and tried to sort out what was Children's Garden. He saw a place with a wide, tall gate, and inside--two big buildings standing next to each other in a big, wide compound. The bus stopped; Alex got out with the other passengers. As it turned out, some of the women passengers were also heading for the "Garden". Alex walked with them through the gate and up the cemented steps of the

CHILDREN--ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT

Administration building. Inside, behind a desk, was a motherly-looking woman, Mrs. Asuncion A. Perez. She was not so big, Alex thought to himself. Just then Alex heard the woman speak, "Can I help you?" Hesitant-ly at first, but then he had to do something. So he approached the desk and answered, "Yes, Ma'am." "What can I do for you?" she asked. He then told Mrs. Perez in not so many words what he desired in his heart. Mrs. Perez listened attentively. Sometimes she nodded her head sometimes she smiled.

Alex was admitted to Children's Garden. There he found a home. There he learned to love Jesus. He lived there until he finished high school, upon which time he decided to work for the church. Today, Alex is a pastor of a local church in one of the suburbs of Manila, not far from Children's Garden. He and his wife and children are happily serving the Lord.

CHILDREN - ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT

Day 2

Who Needs Water?

Preparations: Corner table with small plants in tin cans or empty milk cartons; drawings or pictures from magazines of rain, cloud, sky see, rivers, etc; a jar or pitcher of water; cookies.

Bible verse: "While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease." Gen.8: 22 RSV.

Song: "And God said said the sun should shine
The rain should fall
And God said the flowers should grow
And it was so, was so."

Game: "Who needs water?" Enumerate as many as possible.

Story: Wells and Water Pumps

Ramon lived in the barrio. His mother would call him from his play and tell him, "Please fetch water from the well, Son." Ramon willingly obeyed. He would get two water buckets (made from empty kerosene cans by his father). He would hung them by a ring on either side or end of a bamboo pole, and slung the pole on his shoulder. On the way he would see other boys also racing to the well. Ramon was taller and bigger and he always was at the well ahead of the other boys. Ramon would lower a pail into the well by the long rope. Then pull it up and empty the contents of the pail into the buckets until they are filled. On his way back to their house, he would walk carefully so as to minimize the amount of water he spilled. He did not think that the water was safe for drinking. One day, he asked his mother, "Do you boil the water we use as drinking water?" His mother replied, "Oh yes, Son. That's why we have this clay jar up here. It stores whatever water I have boiled

CHILDREN - ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT

for drinking. It also cools the water." Ramon really helped his mother with the house chores. But he enjoyed better helping his father repair bicycles and make yokes for the carabaos. He also tried to be of assistance to their neighbors. Ramon grew up to be a helpful and dutiful man. He also enjoyed tinkering with machines, so when he asked his father for permission to attend technical school, his father approved. From there he went to the University where he was at the top of his class. After graduation, he returned to his hometown where he became manager of the only transportation company in his province. He made lots of friends because of his honest dealings with people. He was very popular.

Many years later he was nominated to become President of the Philippines. He was elected by a landslide victory.

The first thing he did as President was visit the rural folks to find out their needs. One of their greatest needs, he soon found out, was safe drinking water. Immediately he worked for the installation of pump wells in all the barrio centers and rural towns of the country. These were called "liberty wells." Ramon Magsaysay died in a plane crash before he finished his term of office, but to this day, his people remember him as a great man because of his simplicity and his wells.

Scripture: Gen. 16:7-15 (God provided water for Ishmael & Hagar).

Kind hearts are the garden, kind thoughts are the roots;
Kind words are the flowers, kind deeds are the fruits.

CHILDREN - ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT

Day 3 Does God Care When We Are Hungry?

Preparation: Fresh vegetables or fruits on visual corner. Prepare salad for snack time later.

Song: "Thank You for the World So Sweet" (Grace before meals).

Game: "I'm Going to Market". Each child is given name of fruit or vegetable.

Snack time

Story: Ambassador for Good Nutrition

Priscilla was an active girl. She loved to run and jump and skip. Most of all she loved to eat the vegetables which her mother prepared for lunch. At home, her family grew string beans, eggplants, bitter melons, sweet potatoes and tomatoes in their garden. She always volunteered to help water the plants.

When Priscilla went to school, she enjoyed learning how to cook and prepare meals. Her teacher told her parents about it. Priscilla went on to college and took up a degree in teaching. Her specialty was home economics. She was also active in church work. When the call for missionaries to Sarawak came, Priscilla was ready. She went to Sarawak, learned their language and lived among the people. She taught proper nutrition. The people loved her. They even helped her write a book of international recipes. In addition to Sarawak, she also went to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. She is now in Bangladesh, still a missionary, a real ambassador of God for good nutrition.

Scripture: Daniel 1:7-21 (Daniel and his friends); II Kings 17:8-15.

Pictures of cracked earth--drought; rivers drying up, parks destroyed and litter all over--because of people's negligence.

CHILDREN - ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT

Day 4 God Lays His Hands of Comfort

Preparation: Pictures of children with dentist, doctor, nurse, hospitals, clinics, etc. Discuss a time of sickness. How does it feel to be sick? (Question and answer). Hot with fever, cold with chills; cannot go to school, cannot play.
Role play: Doctor and patient, nurse & sick child, dentist, etc.

Story: Dr. Jose Rizal Operates on His Mother

Jose was born in the town of Calamba, Laguna. Jose belonged to a large family. They had a big house. His parents loved all their children. They did their best to give their children what they needed. They all had a happy childhood. They encouraged their children to develop their talents, and excel in something. Jose was good in carving and made models in wood and clay. He made so many uses of his hand and mind. As a young man he wrote poems, sculpted and painted. He even drew portraits of himself. He went to train as a doctor in Europe. He studied and learned to speak German, Latin, Spanish, French. He wrote books telling people ways to love their country and people. Then the Spaniards became suspicious of his popularity through his books. So they put him in exile in the island of Dapitan, in Mindanao. While there, he heard about his mother's problem with her eyes. Jose Rizal asked the authorities to allow him to go home so he could operate on his mother's eyes, which they gave. An able surgeon, Dr. Rizal performed the operation successfully. Dr. Rizal did all he could to make people happy, and he helped make the Philippines and people free. But he died a martyr under the Spaniards on December 31, 1898.

Scriptures: Psalms 103:2; Mark 1:29-31.

CHILDREN - ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT

Day 5

God Loves and Forgives Us

Teacher's Preparation: Read Luke 15:3-32 (One Who Came Home).

Bible Verse: "...as God has forgiven you, so also must you forgive."
Col. 3:13 RSV.

Activity I: Label Card I--"How many times in a day did I or was I..."

Prepared cards: On each card is written a word--friendly, helpful, kind, neat, curse, steal, quarrel, lazy, share, greedy, etc. Each child writes his/her card how many times he/she did or was what the word suggested on back of card. Example: lie (3 times, truthful (5 times) etc.. Each child writes name on card. Teacher collects card for activity II.

Song or Verse to learn: "Kind hearts are the garden" to the tune of
"O How I Love Jesus"
"Kind hearts are the garden, kind thoughts are the roots;
Kind words are the flowers, kind deeds are the fruits."

Activity II: A Prayer of Forgiveness

Teacher distributes cards to the children whose names had been earlier written on the cards. Each child is also given a piece of paper and pencil. As teacher calls on each child to read his/her card, everybody else will say, "Dear God, please forgive..." Example, first child might say, "I lied three times", everybody else will respond, "Dear God, please forgive..." When everybody has finished reading, all will say together, "Dear God, help me to be honest, kind, true, friendly, patient, obedient, loving, happy and diligent at all times. Amen."

Prayer song: (To the tune of "O How I Love Jesus"
Lord, teach me to love you, Lord teach me to love you,
Lord, teach me to love you, In all that I say and do. Amen.

Closing Story: Nonoy Finds About the Right Direction

Nonoy was so happy. It was the first day of his long vacation from school. Two months away from school! And only last night before he went to sleep, he prepared his sling (tirador). He made sure he had tough rubber band ready. He himself whittled a small branch of their camachile tree for his handle. In his pocket, he touched with his hands the right size of pebbles he had picked up on his way home from school.

He was going to help his father take care of the rice field. The rice were ripening and it seemed that the scarecrows which his father had put up needed help in driving away the rice birds which fed on the grains. Nonoy would shoot the birds with his tirador. Besides, he himself could dress the birds he would shoot so his mother could cook them later. Just the mere thought of bird "adobo" made his mouth water. On his way to the batalan (part of the house where water jars are kept), Mother called, "Drink your slabat (ginger tea) first!" Nonoy dipped a lumbo (dipper made from coconut shell) and washed his face, before he answered his mother. "Opo, Inang" (Yes, Mother). After drying his face, and combed his hair, he sat down where his mother had made ready a steaming cup of salabat, and a plate of sinangag and paksiw (fried rice with fish boiled in water with little vinegar, crushed ginger with salt to taste), and prayed, "Thank you God, for this food, Amen." He had hardly eaten when Berto and Siano called from below, "Nonoy, let's go. We have to start early."

"Nandiyan na" (Coming!), Nonoy answered.

"Please, Inay", he pleaded with his mother, "May I just eat my sinangag and paksiw when I come back? I will share in father's sack lunch." His mother agreed. "But be sure to finish eating the food on your plate when you come home this afternoon", ordered his mother. "Yes, Inay," he promised. Then Nonoy rushed down the steps to be with Berto and Siano.

On their way to the rice fields, Siano had an idea. Berto and Nonoy listened attentively. "We will pass by Manong Diego's cornfield first, and roast some ears of corn, so that we will not go hungry," he

CHILDREN - ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT

concluded. "Okay", Berto readily agreed. But Nonoy was reluctant. He knew Manong Diego. He wondered if he would mind losing three ears of his corn to them. By then, the three boys had reached Manong Diego's corn field. Sure enough, the corn was ready--it was just right for roasting. Berto and Siano started. Nonoy did not follow, so Berto said, "Nonoy, pick your choice!" Nonoy answered, "But shouldn't we ask Manong Diego's permission first?" Siano replied, "Oh, he would think nothing of it." "Besides, nobody else is here who could see us pick the corn." Berto looked to the right, and then he looked to the left and added, "Right, nobody can see us." But Nonoy firmly said, "Did you look up?" Siano asked, "Why, who can see us from there?" Nonoy answered, "Nobody can see us from the right, nor from the left, but God can see us from above." The two boys bowed their heads in shame.

Prayer song: Lord, teach me to love you, Lord teach me to love you,
Lord, teach me to love you, In all that I say and do. Amen.

CHILDREN - ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT

Week 11, Day 1

We Care About Others

Preparation: On the browsing table--scissors and old magazines. Under card heading, 'Who is a Stranger?' cut out pictures of people you think are strangers. Suggestions --refugees of war, victims of floods, earthquakes, fires, droughts, etc. and people the children don't know about, but whom they want to help or whom they are already helping.

Bible story: Luke 10:25-37, The Good Samaritan.

Activity: Dramatize the story with improvised costumes (bath robes, choir gowns, bed sheets, scarves, scraps of cloth. Assign pupils to bring something to put on the day before.

Song: "It's Love that Makes the World Go 'Round", "Hey, Hey, Anybody Listening".

Closing story (Optional)

The New Girl in School

Josefa came to school for the first time. She held her mother's hand tightly. She was saying, "Please, don't leave me. Stay with me the whole day." Her mother replied, "I have to go home to prepare you and your father a good dinner." Just then Miss Cruz arrived and smiled at Josefa. She turned to Josefa's mother and said, "Please don't worry about Josefa. She will have friends here." Thereupon, she called a small, dark girl with short, curly hair, "Manuela, come over. I like you to meet Josefa."

Manuela drew near, smiled at Josefa, and held her hand. Josefa thought to herself, "They have accepted Manuela. Why, she looks very much like me. We are both Negritoes."

When Josefa's mother bade goodbye to her, Josefa responded, "Goodbye." "After all," she thought to herself, "Miss Cruz and Manuela are here."

CHILDREN - ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT

Week 11, Day 2

We Care About the Helpless

Activity Table I - Label card says, "How do you feel?" to questions:

1. When you see an older person crossing the street slowly.
2. When you see a crippled person, 3. blind person; 4. Other handicapped persons?

Pictures to show or look at: Old persons, blind, the seriously ill, etc. cut out from old magazines and newspapers.

Song: "God Is So Good to Me"

God loves me so, God loves us all. (Make other verses if possible).

Bible Verses: 1 Samuel 16:7, "Man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart."

Activity Table II - Making a litany of thanksgiving (Suggestions from pupils).

Leader: God made each one of us,

All: Thank you God, for giving us life.

Leader: God made all the peoples of the world.

All: Thank you, God, for all kinds of people.

Leader: God gave us families...

All: Thank you, God, for making all families important.

Leader: God gave us friends and loved ones to care about, and the strength to serve them.

All: Thank you God, for caring about us; so help us care about others.
AMEN.

CHILDREN - ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT

Week 11, Day 3

Telling Others About Jesus

Table 1: -Holy Bible, a copy for each child, or one for every two.
Teacher and class read together or read part of II Kings 4:11-37,
A Hebrew Maid Tells about Her God.

Table 11: Label card - Some things I can do to tell others about Jesus.

1. Being pleasant always.
2. Being truthful at all times.
3. Being friendly with those who have no friends.
4. Being neat and clean.
5. Mindful of my parents.
6. Going to church and inviting someone else along.

Bible verse: "Even a child makes himself known by his acts, whether what he does is pure and right." Prov. 20:11 (RSV).

Closing story:

Little Missionaries

In the small Sunday School room, children were busy making their mission banks, a cardboard box with a slit on top to drop coins. Each Sunday they would drop a coin in the box for their missionary in Okinawa. Yes, the missionary there used to be their teacher in the Sunday School and Vacation Bible School. They called her Manang Willa. So these children were happy to give what they could afford in order to help her in her work in Okinawa. They knew Manang Willa loved the children of Okinawa, as she loves them. Oftentimes, they would receive a letter from Manang Willa which says, "You are all my little missionaries. Your gifts are helping me to make the children of Okinawa happy. Jesus loves you, and I love you. We all love Jesus, don't we?"

Love Offering: "God loves a cheerful giver." II Cor. 8.7 RSV.

CHILDREN - ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT

Week 11, Day 4

We Pray for Others

Table 1 - Label card - Prayer reminders

Bible verses to write on cards (Punch hole in each card to put together with yarn and/or string, Bibles.

1. Jeremiah 32: 17 - "Sovereign Lord, you made the earth and the sky; by your great power and might, nothing is too difficult for you."
2. Matthew 5:41 - "Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you."
3. James 5:16 - "The prayer of a good person has powerful effect."
4. 1 Peter 1:17 - "The Lord watches over the righteous and listens to their prayers; but he opposes those who do evil."
5. 1 Peter 3:12 - "You shall call him Father when you pray to God."
6. 1 John 3:22, "We receive from God whatever we ask, because we obey his commands, and do what pleases him."

Closing story: (Optional)

Praying Helps

During World War II many missionaries who were working in the Philippines became prisoners of war. They had to stay in the concentration camps which were set up in hospitals, and at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila.

The missionaries' Filipino friends got in touch with one another and started meeting secretly for prayers. They met in churches. Or when that was not possible, in homes. One group met in Central Methodist Church in Manila. They were sustained by praying together. No doubt their missionary friends have been sustained, too. They also collected food, medicines and other supplies they could find, and smuggled these passed the guards to their missionary friends. They were much encouraged and strengthened. Prayer was the common bond that united them even in time of difficult testing.

CHILDREN - ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT

Week 11, Day 5 Sharing Ourselves With Others

Table 1: Help children remember the people they have talked about during the DVCS. Label card on table says, "Their Choice of Vocations". Prepare sets of cards to match. One set, names of persons like Dr. Jose Rizal, Rev. Alex Canete, Ramon Magsaysay, Priscilla Padolina, Willa Udarbe. The other set, --engineer, doctor, teacher, deaconess, pastor. Pupils match cards. Role play --Dr. Jose Rizal operating on his mother's eyes; Ramon Magsaysay visiting the barrio to see for himself how people are enjoying his Liberty Wells; Priscilla Padolina talking to a group of women about the vegetables and fruits she held in her hands (girls could wear long skirts or night gowns); Alex Canete standing before his congregation and preaching; Willa Udarbe teaching a song to some children ("Jesus Loves the Little Children").

Bible verses of thanksgiving and praise (for Church School Banners). Copy from the Bible or teacher's sample. (See Psalms 100:1-3; 1 Sam. 2:1; Psalms 34:1-2; Psalms 40:5; Psalms 66:1-3).

Closing story

A Happy Decision

Ester had already decided to become a deaconess even before she went to high school. She often remembered her mother's prayer for her before bedtime--"God, thank you for Ester's life. I will be so happy if she will desire to serve you. Thank you, Lord, if you can use her in your ministry. Amen."

Ester's brothers and sisters were ten in all. She was the eighth child. Her father was a farmer. He and his wife were able to send them all to school. Her parents saw to it that their children loved the Lord. Ester was happy to teach in the DVCS in the barrio. She also loved to sing Sunday School songs and teach children's songs. So when she finished high school, her church recommended her to go to Harris Memorial College. Her district and the Annual Conference likewise recommended her so she started her studies at Harris Memorial College that year. She excelled in school,

During weekends, she went with a group of students which she organized visiting with churches around Manila, conducting extension classes, and in members homes. Upon graduation, she was assigned in her home province of Zambales. She worked with children, youth and adults. She later traveled around the country for the Board of Education of the Philippines Central Conference, The United Methodist Church, where she now serves as Executive Secretary.

On Going Process

I have indicated earlier that the task of developing materials will be an on-going one, and does not inhibit the ministry from using readily available materials. Becoming familiarized with the materials will enable teachers to adopt it to their particular needs, which is one of the purposes of the project described above. Indeed, one learns by doing, and using and utilizing our curriculum materials are no exception.

Community Services

I wish now to turn to community outreach aspects of this design for ministry. One of the most common mistakes which newly established ministries, especially ethnic groups, within the church is to go into areas of service where they, in effect compete with city, the county, state or even federally established services. It is one thing to touch base with those agencies as, for instance, with the department of social services in terms of referral. It is another to become involved deeper and deeper into that kind of service, too, until one starts going in circles and spin wheels. In other words, we need to remember our role as that of a catalyst in certain areas of endeavor, and the community outreach or service is a good example in which that role is exercised.

Theological Base

It is important for this design, therefore, to be mindful of the theological base upon which to ground social concern and community outreach services. For in the first place, we undertake this only because

it is a necessary expression of the gospel that we seek to preach. In this regard, one needs to consider where the ministry can provide the best possible kind of service with the resources that are available, taking into consideration both immediate resources and potential resources.

One of the things I would consider including in this design is the possibility of helping organize a credit union. This would be immensely helpful not only to newly arrived immigrants, but also to those who are already established. It would help unite both in the community as one is enabled to help the other through the credit union; and it will be an opportunity to teach Christian stewardship and related aspects of discipleship having to do with money and possessions.

Other Community Organizations

Southern California is teeming with immigrants who were established professionals in their respective home countries. The Filipinos are probably one of the largest in that category. There are no community agencies that are doing anything to help people during their period of adjustments, especially when it comes to such professionals, because it is considered one of "low profile". By that I mean there is little to gain because there is too much to do in dealing with the state and federal bureaucracy, with little resources to back you up. I see the ministry intentionally seeking to help empower people who are underemployed; discriminated against because their education and training were obtained from outside the United States, unjustly and unfairly excluded from government examinations and have no one for an advocate.

And again, because it is a continuing process, we will have to learn new ways, discard ideas that failed, adopt or try new ones in the hope that they might be useful for the ministry.

A New Model

A new and controversial model is being tried in this Conference, the outline and guidelines of which have been developed through the direction of Ms. Diane Moats, of the Conference's Department of Ethnic Planning and Strategy. Under this new model, new mission projects, funded largely through the Congregational Development Fund of the Board of Global Ministries are started where a particular ethnic group happens to have some presence, or promise of succeeding. That is why it is called simply Ministry of Presence, which means that the church seeks to minister to people where they are located. It is largely an ethnic oriented program, which partly explains the controversy surrounding. The project may be partly a reaction to the policy of the church in previous years that involved the purchase of real estate in connection with new mission projects. With the new model of Ministry of Presence, a new mission project does not always require such a purchase of real estate, but rather have the Conference absorb much of the housekeeping items involved in order to free the new project to concentrate on the task of ministry.

Ms. Moats, in a paper presented to the Board of Global Ministries in 1976, defined the new model as follows:

...an attempt to make personnel and economic resources available to an ethnic community with the purpose of developing a ministry which effectively communicates with residence, develops credibility, and begins to meet the demands and needs of the community

residents with the ultimate goal of facilitating the creating of a worshipping congregation which is in the tradition of The United Methodist Church.⁴

As a new and experimental model, it assumes several elements, some of which are as follows:

- 1) As a Ministry of Presence is experimental, thus flexible and ready to adjust to emerging needs of the area where it is located.
- 2) It is ready to try new approaches to worship and administration which are indigenous to the community. It is open to other religious and cultural traditions.
- 3) It emphasizes community (ethnic) participation in the development of ministry to insure ownership, relevance, and local support.
- 4) It assumes that the groups involved in the experiment will collect data that will provide tools for future congregational development projects among minorities.

One of the important aspects of this project is that the Conference seeks to support it with as little if any at all of paternalism or interference in the design for the growth and the good of the congregation or group concerned.

In most of the ministries so far--with the Koreans, Hispanics, and the Native Americans, the model has been instrumental in the development of a new congregation. Yet it is understood that that is not the sole purpose of the ministries. It has a built-in flexibility. In a conversation with Ms. Moats before I begun my new assignment, she said:

⁴Diane Moats, "Congregational Development--A Look to the Future", Presented at Church Building and Training Workshop, February 21, 1976.

We are obviously on untested grounds. We do not have complete guidelines to offer you. Rather you who are going to be involved in this exciting new ministry need to gather data for us so that we might continue to develop and perfect it.⁵

In a brief column for *The First United Methodist Churchman*, I have sought to share my own understanding, my perceptions and my hopes concerning this kind of ministry. And I believe that the new model will

...seek to establish a ministry that is sensitive particularly to the presence of the Filipino. The task will be done with varied approaches, but with an eye, in the words of Bishop Charles F. Golden, "to the establishment of a Filipino congregation whenever and wherever feasible" as a means of strengthening this ethnic minority group, in the spirit of the General Conference quadrennial emphasis on the ethnic minority local church...I have been asked, "Why a Filipino congregation?" My answer is "Why not?" One objection being raised is that that will be segregative. My contention is that that will be affirmative of the Filipino-American experience. Persons are enabled to grow only when they are allowed to be themselves, with their cultural and ethnic peculiarities intact, free to appropriate the challenges and opportunities of faith into their own growth in discipleship...this kind of ministry comes in the tradition that has made The United Methodist Church's ministry vital and an authentic expression of the best that the Christian ministry has to offer.⁶

More specifically, the formal proposal for the project provides some clues by means of which we might be able to fashion handles for this new model. It says,

It will seek to provide intentionality for the efforts for ministry with and among Filipinos in the area. It will engage in a variety of approaches to ministry...development of indigenous worship, enrichment of curriculum, leadership training (seminars,

⁵Statement by Ms. Diane Moats, Director, Dept. of Ethnic Planning and Strategy, June 11, 1978 Interview, Los Angeles.

⁶Vivencio L. Vinluan, "Perceptions on a New Assignment", *First United Methodist Churchman*, June 25, 1978. Cf. Harold Johnson, "Crisis of Clarity", *Open Letter*, July 12, 1978.

workshops, institutes, camps and retreats) which will enable Filipinos (to) find meaningful relationships with the United Methodist Church.⁷

The proposal elaborated by spelling out specific goals. This is one situation where funding proposal forms particularly in cases like this in which new and innovative models are involved, are most helpful in pushing applicants to spell out their guts in terms of specifics, and not be content in grandiose generalities. It says:

(The proposed project will) create a situation for a serious consideration of an evangelistic thrust among Filipinos in the area; seek personnel, preferably a clergy person, to coordinate the different efforts toward a more effective and responsive ministry with and among Filipinos; develop models for, and conduct workshops, seminars, institutes, etc. for leadership development and discipleship training and spiritual growth, and work in close cooperation with local churches in their efforts to involve Filipinos in the life of the church and its ministry...⁸

One important thing about this new model is that those who are involved in it are encouraged and affirm in every way, without being pushed into a stance of having "to succeed." They will seek to succeed of course in proclaiming the gospel with all the power they can muster. At the same time, it is recognized that it will be unfair to judge success in the usual manner for a ministry which, while it holds considerable promise for the church, is also in its developmental stage. In a letter to the Reverend N. Robert Kesler, Superintendent of Long Beach district, Ms. Moats, again of Ethnic Planning and Strategy, said:

Because of the experimental nature of the Ministries of Presence data gathering is important. We need to know what strategies were planned and tried. What failed, and what succeeded, and

⁷Filipino Caucus, "Application for Funding", August, 1977, pp.6-7.

⁸Ibid.

why did they fail or succeed. We understand there might not be success in all areas. In this design it is o.k. for some models, styles, strategies to fail. From that experience we can then compile what will or will not work for starting new ethnic churches. The important part is that the end product, a church, is developed with a firm base and leadership potential for the continuation of a strong church.⁹

Just a word needs to be said more about the model, which is that, as it evolves, it will inevitably contain mini-models. It will entail a variety of styles to fit the rich blending of needs and opportunities and the tremendous richness of the experience of our people, eager to make their own mark in the new social milieu which they now call home, for a greater impact and contribution to the general church, and in helping articulate the ethnic minority cause of liberation and redemption.

Other Possibilities

I am not without serious criticism of the Ministry of Presence as a model. In the first place, in the unique situation of the Filipinos in this Conference, in which large numbers of locations and settings need to be served at the same time, the model seems of just limited usefulness. It seems to lack the mobility of the early Methodist United Societies, and the deployment of personnel as though they were being assigned to a local church makes the problem seem even more acute. However, its open-ended style, its openness to new models and the develop-

⁹Based on a Personal Letter of Ms. Diane Moats to Rev. N. Robert Kesler, Long Beach District Superintendent, June 27, 1978.

ment of new designs for ministry, and the possibility for real creativeness is ministry make it, indeed, an exciting innovation and opportunity today.

And I also see the possibility of working out an accommodation with that of John Wesley's deployment of trained assistants, with or by means of the possible cooperation of churches where Filipinos may be found. Members would be ministered to and guided, and nurtured in Christian discipleship. They may be gathered in separate congregations, although to all intents and purposes they continue as members of those respective churches. Assistants are accountable to the District Superintendent or an elder assigned under him for that purpose, and not to the local pastor, although effort will be made to seek his or her cooperation and assistance. In this manner, we accomplish several things. One, we avoid the problem of "pirating members"; two, we avoid the necessity of having an associate just for the purpose of serving an ethnic constituency within the local church, because the need is much more widespread and extends beyond the local church; and three, we provide greater flexibility, but especially greater mobility, thus facilitating a greater volume of services being delivered and making the conduct of ministry more relevant to the pace of present day living. But by far the most important thing of all is the less static application of the principle of connectionalism as we know it in United Methodism.

Organized Congregation

The end result of all these efforts for ministry will be the formation of a covenant community which, as we have seen, is determined

by the activity of ministry. This is as it should be. It will be a greater glory of God if such a congregation were to emerge through our efforts in ministry, with the full support and cooperation of the whole Conference, than if we continued as little ethnic pockets within the established local churches as now obtains, ultimately just to shore up declining memberships or to help keep those local churches from dying, when they needed to die in the first place, if they do.

Conclusion

I wish to offer this as a small contribution to the continuing discussion and dialogue for a creative ministry in our Conference. I see it as reflecting the organizational genius of United Methodism as shown in its connectionalism, but especially I see in it reflected its superb evangelistic zeal and its openness to innovation and creativeness, informed by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 9

CONCLUSION

Mr. William Rollins, Executive Director of the Pacific and Southwest Annual Conference Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church, in an address delivered to the Filipino Caucus annual meeting on January 21, 1979 said:

I call upon you to be a part of the total ministry of the Church, which is soul-saving and service within the context of our day and age...You are free to choose to exist within the congregations of Anglos within the church. You are also free to choose whether you need a church or congregation of your own. In any case, you must never lose sight of the precious nature of the culture you brought with you...¹

His was a significant statement, coming as it did from a leader of the Church and representing a facet of the church's ministry which is directly involved with missional concerns, and who is himself a committed and dedicated participant in the task of bringing about a pluralistic and inclusive church.

Recapitulation

In this thesis I have concerned myself with ethnic ministry in general, and in the search for a viable ministry for Filipinos in particular. It brought me through a discussion of the unique and peculiar situation in which Filipinos find themselves as strangers in a strange land, churchless but not without faith, and the attendant problem that

¹William Rollins, "Address to the Filipino Caucus", January 21, 1979.

these circumstances pose for themselves and for the church, especially the United Methodist Church. It was thus necessary to examine the church as a whole as a context in which Filipinos might find themselves at home. This involved a close look at the beginnings of United Methodism, its concept of ministry as one that finds its base on the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. This has produced, I hope, the necessary insights into the various modes by means of which the church's ministry finds creative expression today, as in the beginning, namely, through the work of the Holy Spirit and finding fruits in disciplined living. I have also found useful the opportunity to have taken a closer look at United Methodist connectionalism.

One feature that I have also found useful and helpful in this project is the greater and more comprehensive view I gained regarding the place of ethnic minorities within the folds of our great church. In this regard, I have gained a greater respect and appreciation for efforts being made in the desire to make of our church a more inclusive fellowship. I have come to better realize that, although we are far from being perfect fellowship, we are perhaps a healthier church for all the effort because we seek to manifest an ideal to which the Spirit challenges us at all times. This is, of course, a challenge to become even more open to the guidance of the Spirit in the life of our church.

Liberation Theme

Concerning the ethnic minority groups in our church, I have sought to understand us, in relation to the liberation elements of our theology and our identification with the struggle against oppression.

I have, for instance, found Roy Sano's criticism of that liberation theme as inadequate, and have been fascinated by his suggestion to consider seriously the apocalyptic figure in the Bible. When I realized that even the apocalyptic model was inadequate and fraught with considerable difficulties, I was led back to John Wesley's model of team ministry and preaching and the possibilities of his highly structured organization as even more tantalizing, and now see in it real possibilities in the development of an intentional ministry for Filipinos. My consideration of some models and of various church settings, on a representative basis, and my description of various modifications and styles was followed by my own attempt at designing a ministry which might be useful both on a localized setting, as well as on a larger scale within the Conference and even beyond.

This concluding statement has to do with the fact that I believe that a combination or cross of the ministry of Presence with that of John Wesley's model of team preaching and ministry could combine flexibility and mobility with evangelistic zeal and Christian nurture. The history of Methodism has revealed it to be one which is sensitive to creative innovations, and is best suited to winds of change despite its highly structured system of governance, because of its connectional character as a church. This might a time in which we could find more creative use of our glorious heritage, not the least of which might be a discovery of new uses for our connectionalism.

Our need is to provide a ministry so that none might be turned away. An intentional, holistic ministry by the church to Filipinos

does not by its very nature exclude any because of its particularity; rather it will provide the necessary clarity that is so lacking in our approach today to various aspects of ministry, so that those who come might be able to do so not as strangers groping in a strange land, but finally, home to the Master who calls, "Come unto me...you will find rest unto your souls." (Matthew 11:29 RSV).

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